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The South Africans

By the Same Author

GOD'S STEPCHILDREN

MARY GLENN

AN ARTIST IN THE
FAMILY

THE DARK RIVER

THE JORDANS

ADAM'S REST

MIDDLE CLASS

THE COMING OF

THE LORD

THE FIDDLER

THE SOUTH AFRICANS

By Sarah Gertrude Millin

London

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To
My Husband
Philip Millin

CONTENTS

PART I

| | PAGE |
|--------------------------|------|
| THE BACKGROUND | I |

PART II

| | |
|--|----|
| MODERN SOUTH AFRICA AND THE DIAMOND ADVENTURERS | 37 |
|--|----|

PART III

| | |
|---|----|
| MODERN SOUTH AFRICA AND THE GOLD ADVENTURERS | 67 |
|---|----|

PART IV

| | |
|----------------------------------|----|
| LIVING IN SOUTH AFRICA | 97 |
|----------------------------------|----|

PART V

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| POLITICS IN SOUTH AFRICA | 117 |
|------------------------------------|-----|

PART VI

| | |
|--|-----|
| THE PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA TO-DAY | 149 |
| The Boers—The English—The Jews—The Asiatics —The Half-castes. | |

PART VII

| | |
|---|-----|
| THE PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA TO-DAY | 211 |
| The Kaffir. | |

PART I

The Background

CHAPTER I

I

WHEN Anthony Trollope came to South Africa in the year 1877, he went through it—its provinces and its problems—with his characteristic swift and imperturbable thoroughness. He dined with governors, slept in Boer farmhouses, inspected mission-schools, chatted with Kaffirs, with Hottentots, with poor whites, with Dutchmen, with Englishmen. He bought a cart and a team of horses, and travelled across land as yet untracked by railways. He entered a Transvaal recently annexed by Sir Theophilus Shepstone, his eight Civil servants and twenty-five policemen. He chronicled, as he went on his way, a new revolt by Kreli and his Galekas. He realised the importance of the diamond-fields, but barely foresaw the consequences of the gold-fields. He stood, that is, at the very point in history where the old Africa ended and the new Africa began. He looked at what was shown him and listened to what was told him and said: "I shall write my book and not yours." He built up, as day by day he discharged on paper his clear and detailed impressions, as sane and wise a book on South Africa as has ever been written, a book which, despite some mistakes, has still, for our own times, its meaning. And, in the Bay of Biscay, as he was voyaging home, he penned his final conclusion: "South Africa," he wrote, "is a

The South Africans

country of black men—and not of white men. It has been so ; it is so ; and it will be so.”

To-day, fifty years later, South Africa is sitting up suddenly, as one awakened by the clapping of his own heart, and asking if that is true : if it is really possible that this land may not, after all, be the land of the white man and the heritage of his children, if South Africa is, indeed, as Anthony Trollope said, a land, not of white men, but of black men.

2

There is in South Africa a river called the Vaal River. It is not what, at first thought, might be considered the most essential thing in South Africa. It is not a wonder of the world like the Victoria Falls. It has not the grandeur of the great mountains of the Cape of Storms against which two oceans battle. It has not the terrible, primæval beauty of the naked and desolate ranges of the Transvaal. But yet it is this Vaal River, this dun-coloured river, which most truly symbolises South Africa.

That is what its Dutch name means—dun-coloured. And, in olden days, the Hottentots called it, applying to it the adjective that described their own skins, the Gij Gariep, the Yellow River.

One bathes in this Vaal River, and there is a fine layer of mud settled on one's chin. In winter it trickles apologetically among great, black, shiny, defiant stones ; and in summer, swollen by rains in the Transvaal, it rushes down in a thundering wall of water, thick and overbearing and dangerous and arrogant, like a whining beggar who has been left a fortune overnight. Boers escaping from the pressure of humanity—looking for some place where they might not see

The Back ground

the smoke from the next man's habitation—sought for loneliness beside it and across it. The half-caste Griquas and Bastaards, trying to make nations of themselves, settled along it in little defensive groups. Black men came marauding to its banks. . . .

Under the hot sun it shines, when it is not in flood, like molten metal. It runs through the lands of diamonds and gold and platinum. In the very bed of it there are diamonds, and the adventurous and the careless and the outcast come to it for sudden wealth. Its water is drunk in three provinces.

And along its banks are trees called Waacht-een-bietje trees. . . . Wait-a-bit, that Dutch name means, because there are thorns on the trees which catch at one and make one stop . . . wait-a-bit.

3

“Waacht-ccn-bietje,” as everyone knows, are the words of Africa. It has said them thoughtfully, menacingly, alluringly, hopefully. But, whenever the question of the black man has come upon South Africa, it has said: “Yes, yes. One day. When we have time. But not now. Wait-a-bit.”

CHAPTER II

I

YET, lately, there is a feeling running through the land like the feeling that is communicated silently from one to another in a crowd till suddenly there rises up a common cry. The time has arrived when South Africa can no longer ignore its native question, can no longer depend on it to solve itself. The black man and the white man, they are irking one another; the yellow man is troubling both; and whether South Africa is to be eventually a black man's country or a white man's country or a yellow man's country is not the only question. There is, after all, the question of the present as well as the future.

Here we all are, a heterogeneous collection of Europeans, an imported and established population of Asiatics, a man-created, rather than a God-created, nation of half-castes, a ghosthood of yellow aboriginals, and a flood—a strong and spreading flood—of dark-skinned African peoples . . . and the really important question is: how, since we are here together, we may live and develop with the least unhappiness and enmity.

2

A distinction has just been made between the South African aboriginals and the spreading flood of other African peoples—the Bantus or Kaffirs.

The Background

What many Europeans apparently do not realise is the fact that the Bantu, in his innumerable variations, is no more aboriginal to South Africa than the white man. As the European established himself here by force, so did the Bantu. South Africa is not his primæval home. As far as history takes us it was the land of the Bushman, who, no doubt, displaced others, and then of the Hottentot. But it is quite certain that the Bantu has no prescriptive right over the European to what has since become the home of both, except in so far as the continent of Africa seems, in general, to be his natural environment.

When the Portuguese, the great adventurers of those times, the gentlemen merchants and missionaries of South-East Africa, discovered South Africa towards the end of the fifteenth century ; when, as the seventeenth century opened, the English anchored their vessels in Table Bay, and, a score of years later, planted King James' flag there and went away again ; when, in 1652, the Dutch East India Company established there a trading station, it was the land of the Bushman and Hottentot that was being invaded, not the land of what we to-day call the Kaffir. It was of the Hottentot that van Riebeeck, the first Dutch Governor, wrote : " They have been trying vainly to get at our cattle, and we have been trying vainly to get at their persons," and it was the Bushman whom the early settlers were allowed to shoot, as wild animals, on sight. The Bantu may have arrived before the European, but he was actually not discovered by the white man for many years after his arrival.

Then sailors, shipwrecked at Delagoa Bay, on the east coast, came back with stories of this new people, who were different from the little yellow folk they had found at the Cape ; who were not as black or as thick-

The South Africans

faced as the Negro slaves the Dutch were importing from West Africa, nor yet as aquiline in cast as were those Asiatics sent out by the Dutch East India Company from Java and Malacca and the Spice Islands to serve their term of imprisonment as slaves in South Africa. . . . And still these men, they said, were reminiscent of all these other folk. They resembled the Negro, and they resembled, though much more faintly, the Hottentot and the Asiatic.

And with good cause. In the Hottentot there is Bantu blood. And as for the Bantu himself—the South African black man—he is not a Negro in the sense that the American black man is a Negro.

His birthplace is actually unknown. But there he is, often, with almond eyes, curved nose, light brown skin, the ability to grow a beard—with social habits that seem sometimes to be related to the East—with, sometimes, a curiously alien faculty; and students of such things have an hypothesis about it. They speak of the Indian and Arab settlements that, since historic times, have dotted the east coast, and they even mention the old Phœnicians who came wandering down Africa—perhaps, who knows, even as far as Rhodesia to find its gold, and to build those great, mysterious, unexplained works the ruins of which at Zimbabwe are the strangest inheritance wrought by human hands that South Africa possesses. In the South African Kaffir there may be the blood of these peoples, they say.

3

The Kaffir, in short, was an invader sweeping downwards from the north, as the European advanced upward from the south, until, having each stepped upon and trodden into the dust the natural inhabitants of

The Background

the soil—those little yellow hindrances—they met and clashed.

And now it was a different story. The small weak Bushman, so near the beginnings of man's creation, with his hollow back, and his hollow cheeks, and his wrinkled, loose-skinned body, and his bows and arrows and unguents and poison and magic and strange artistic gifts, made his paintings on stones and in caves, and was hunted (as depredating wild beasts are hunted) from the land south of the Orange. The Hottentot, a little bigger than the Bushman, a little stronger and further advanced in civilisation, but yet much like him, the Hottentot became the slave of the white man, died, in his thousands, of imported epidemics, bequeathed his blood to that nation of half-castes called the Cape people and which is, practically, a new race, lifted his reeds to his lips with his little hands, piped his dance under the moon, and also disappeared from the land where he had been found.

But the virile black man and the virile white man came face to face and began a struggle for the possession of South Africa.

CHAPTER III

I

SOUTH AFRICA—this union of four provinces which we loosely call South Africa—is primarily a land of racial problems. It considers itself these days a country, a national entity—as one might speak of Canada or Australia or even (it is becoming as self-conscious as all that) the United States, but think, for one moment, of how it is composed. The very people who first discovered South Africa, the Portuguese, are not, curiously enough, a part of its organism, but, for the rest, this is, taken chronologically, the mixture that the Vaal River typifies :

The Dutch, stationed here by the East India Company.

The Hottentots they found.

The Negro slaves they imported.

The Asiatic convicts from the Dutch dependencies who were sent out to serve their terms as slaves.

The banished Indian political offenders of standing who brought their families and servants, and continued coming for over a century.

The parties of young women from orphanages in Holland brought across for the bachelor settlers to marry.

The French Huguenot refugees of good tradition who, following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, came to seek religious freedom.

The Background

More Dutch settlers, but of a superior class to the early ones.

Some Low-Germans.

The British colonists, principally the settlers of 1820.

North-Germans, who, having fought beside the British in the Crimea, were now accommodated near them in the Cape Colony.

The Indians imported to Natal from 1860 onwards, as indentured labourers to the sugar planters, and to-day challenging in numbers its white population.

The diamond and gold adventurers—the settlers of 1870, as they have been called.

The Jews, escaping from the pales and pogroms of Russia and Poland.

The Bastards and the Cape people, the combinations and permutations of the yellow and white of early days, living their self-contained lives apart from the whites, intermarrying, and establishing a new race on the earth.

The outweighing, overbalancing millions of black people. . . .

Of all these the Dutch and French of the seventeenth century combined best. They had, of course, vitally in common their religion and the love of freedom and adventure that had brought them all to this new country. And then, rather less romantically, the Government of the day saw that they should combine. Those unfortunate Huguenots found little more freedom in South Africa than they had found in France. In fifty years their French language was lost, they themselves were merged in the Dutch, and a new people—a people, as one might expect, self-centred and impatient of restraint—was being evolved, whose descendants, with their names as likely as not French, are the Afrikaners of to-day.

The South Africans

It was this passion for freedom, so strong that it amounted almost to an abhorrence of the social life, that first, indirectly, brought the white man into conflict with the black.

It must be remembered that the original white possessors of the Cape were not a nation, but a trading company. What the directors of the Dutch East India Company wanted were not national assets, but commercial profits. What they meant to make of the Cape was not a colony, but a *depôt*. They ruled to that purpose, and they ruled harshly. And those French-Dutch settlers who had escaped from persecution in Europe were not prepared to submit to persecution in Africa. They continued on the veld the policy that had brought them across the sea. They began this system of moving away which the Boer has followed generation after generation, and which, in his mind, he compares with the exodus from Egypt of the persecuted children of Israel. They trekked. And it was as they were trekking along—escaping further and further from the pursuing borders of the Company's government—that they came upon the Kaffirs, advancing southwards from East Central Africa.

This was how white and black at last met in South Africa, and soon they were at war.

3

But, however importantly each individual in South Africa held himself, brooking no interference, demanding the freedom he had come to find, he was not, in these days, the master of his own destiny. There were conflicts going on in Europe, and they involved South

The Background

Africa—or as much of it as was then occupied—the Cape. While the trekkers were evading authority, and struggling, by treaties and by force of arms, to ward off the Kaffirs; in the very year in which settlers on the eastern frontiers of the Company's dominion rebelled and set up their own government; in that year of 1795, Holland had been over-run by revolutionary France, the Prince of Orange was a fugitive in London, and the party he represented was asking England to guard this African outpost from the invader. England accordingly occupied the Cape. Eight years later, peace having been established, she handed it back to the existing Government in Holland, which called itself the Batavian Republic. That was in accordance with the Treaty of Amiens of 1802.

Within three months, however, there was war again, an offshoot of the Napoleonic wars, between England and the Batavian Republic, the adherent of France, and so, presently, the Cape once more changed hands. But this time England took it for herself, overcoming the bewildered resistance of the colony, and this time she kept it. For in the redistribution that followed the Congress of Vienna in 1814 the Cape Colony was formally and finally ceded by Holland to the British Crown for the sum of six million pounds.

That meant renewed reasons for trekking. The land was big enough. If one was dissatisfied with anything, if one resented being shuffled backwards and forwards according to what was going on six thousand miles away, and belonging, without consultation of one's own wishes, now to one and now to another, one moved and sought to belong to oneself.

One took one's waggons, and one's span of oxen, and one's horses and herds and household goods and relations and Hottentot slaves, and one journeyed

The South Africans

along under clear blue skies, across great mountains and desert land, at the rate of a few miles a day, until one came upon a stream, sheltered by a hill. There one outspanned for the last time, built a house and thatched it, made furniture of the beautiful hardwoods of the country, strung beds and chairs with strips of hide, placed about the new home the pottery forefathers had brought from Batavia, allowed cattle and sheep to roam over miles of ground—so many acres to an animal, planted grain and fruit and vegetables . . . and the world was one's own, the earth and the sky, and, as far as the eye could see, all the universe.

There would be no communication with the outside world, and none would be wanted. There would be no tradition but the tradition of freedom and the hospitality that the necessities of desolation engender. There would be no culture but that which might be built upon the foundation of one Book. As one demanded little of life, and there were all the days of the generations in which to get it, one went slowly. One planted a little, and one's ten sons and the Hottentot slaves primitively tended the beasts and tilled the earth.

But a perilous journey had been undertaken to find this peace, a new soil had had to be broken in to establish it, and, since the world nevertheless did not end where one's eye could reach, it was with finger on trigger that one sought to maintain it. There were the wild beasts of the land, and there were the Kaffirs. And there was fighting and never-ceasing fighting.

The date of the first Kaffir war is 1811. The Kaffirs were driven off. No quarter was given, and no prisoners were taken.

The Background

4

Very naturally, when England acquired the Cape she decided to make it English. She left the Common Law which is still maintained in South Africa to-day—that Roman-Dutch Law which Holland itself no longer follows. But she sent for British settlers. She established the English language. And she encouraged British missionaries.

The Dutch quite frankly liked none of these imported things. Most of all they disliked the missionaries. For, as it happened, the missionaries, while assisting the Hottentots to heaven, deprived the farmers of their uses on earth.

Hottentots? Hottentots were one's possessions, and there was the end of it. Had not the Bible definitely degraded the descendants of the unfilial Ham? "Cursed be Canaan. A servant of servants shall he be to his brethren. . . . God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant. . . ."

That indicated very clearly the position of the Hottentots. Here was incontrovertible authority. The word of God was good enough. And so what was all this talk of the rights of the dark-skinned? . . . Putting notions into their heads. . . . Making them difficult to handle. . . . There was a Hottentot who went and laid a complaint against his owner, a man called Bezuidenhout. It was not the sort of thing Bezuidenhout was prepared to encourage, and he refused to obey a summons issued at the instigation of a Hottentot. A party was sent to arrest him, and, in resisting arrest, he was killed.

What resulted now was the first rebellion of the Dutch against British rule. It was ineffective. The

The South Africans

five ringleaders were publicly hanged on the very spot—Slachter's Nek—where they had sworn to drive out the foreign tyrant. Since the scaffolding broke under their combined weight, and the first hanging was consequently unsuccessful, they had to wait for a second gallows to be erected that they might be hanged again, one by one, in the presence of their outraged friends and relations. And when, in 1874, Froude was sent out by the British Government to report on the situation of the South African natives, he declared that the memory of that hanging was still green in the land.

And the effect of it, of course, was that farmers, in greater numbers than ever before, trekked away into the unknown and the unpossessed.

CHAPTER IV

I

THERE were two reasons why the British Government sought to attract British settlers to the Cape. The first was, naturally, that if it had to be a British Colony, it might as well be the home of Britons. The second was that the Kaffirs were becoming very dangerous, and added protection against them was necessary.

And so there took place, in 1820, the first organised immigration of British settlers.

They landed in Algoa Bay, five thousand English and Scottish people, mostly of the artisan and yeoman class. But one of their leaders was Thomas Pringle, the poet, and champion of a free press, and there were others of some standing and culture. And they made their homes in the eastern districts of the Cape Colony, and spread to King William's Town and Grahamstown. Their descendants, however admirably they may have striven and fought to establish themselves in South Africa, to this day feel themselves to be sons of the British Empire, not less than children of African soil, and, like the Rhodesians and Natalians, it is they who are the true South African British colonists. They are more consciously English than the English. And their towns are little English towns, and their customs are little English customs planted in the vastness of Africa. It

The South Africans

is they who will probably, one day, battle most fiercely against the abandonment of the British connection. For secession, if it comes to the point here, will not be considered smoothly on its merits as it might in Australia or New Zealand, where everyone is British. It will not be a question of national policy. It will be a question of traditionally for, or traditionally against, association with England.

2

But now here they were, the British settlers, and here was a new language imposed on the old colonists, and here were the missionaries demanding that the Hottentots and other coloured people should have equal rights with the white people.

They should have equal rights with the white people, these creatures so near the earth, these savages and slaves, they should have the political privileges of their masters and owners ! And not only that : they should have legal rights too. One might no longer treat them as if they were one's own property, bought high with difficult money. They could complain. One was answerable to law. If one punished a Hottentot, one might be very severely punished oneself. What happened to Bezuidenhout fifteen years ago might very easily happen now to anybody. . . .

And that was not the end of it. Conceive, in the middle of all this dissatisfaction, this affront on inherited principles, this feeling of bitter resentment, the arrival, in 1834, of the news that, wherever Britain ruled, slavery itself was to be abolished. There would be compensation, of course, for this loss of human property, a *pro rata* share of the twenty million pounds that was being divided among the nineteen slave

The Background

colonies. But, as it turned out, the Cape colonists received very little of the compensation assigned to them. It was whittled down and whittled down. It was made payable in London. London! How should one get at London? Agents went about offering to negotiate, speculating in claims. The result was that many slave-owners were ruined. There were some too incensed to accept their depreciated bounty. There were others too ignorant to understand the transaction. They gave up their claims to the speculators for whatever they could get. Farmers were left without labourers. Crops remained ungarnered. A gentleman who afterwards became a judge has left on record his indignation at receiving less than fifty pounds for a slave for whom he had refused five hundred.

That, curiously enough, does not arouse one's sympathy as much as it was meant to do. If a slave was worth more than five hundred pounds, he must have had some qualities that deserved freedom.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that the whole affair was conducted with more enthusiasm than good sense. The Boers had been born and bred, as aristocrats are to-day, in the tradition of their fundamental rights over certain inferior beings. They had inherited their slaves as any other kind of property is inherited. The charity of England was bankruptcy to them. They rejected the ideals of England, and they rejected England.

And they trekked.

But, as for the freed Hottentots, one knows, of course, that slavery is an inhuman and indefensible institution. One feels too that a freedom-loving people should have had regard for the freedom of others. But the truth is the Hottentots were overwhelmed by the civilisation in which they could now

The South Africans

liberally participate. They were no longer valuable to anyone except the missionaries. They were little more capable of fending for themselves than cage-bred birds or circus-trained animals. They were free, as it turned out, to die. And they did so with great despatch.

Perhaps, having, in Emerson's words, guano in their destiny, they would not, in any case, have been able to face a changing world. Still, this is certain: they were released from slavery, and they are not here to-day.

On the other hand, since women were not now personal property, the creation of what the South African bluntly calls *Bastaards* was also to a large extent stemmed.

The blood of the Hottentots, however, survives, as does the Negro blood in the old Slave States of America. The opponents of black blood passed it on to their children.

3

The trekking of the Dutch this time was a formidable affair, and it received a further impetus from the fact that responsible people in England were in these days adopting the view that the white, and not the black, inhabitants of the Cape were to blame for those continual Kaffir wars; that no compensation was due to the farmers for their losses, and that the territory they had recently won ought to be returned to the Kaffirs. There was a missionary called Dr. Philip speaking very hotly on behalf of the coloured races, saying they would be exterminated if they were exposed to intercourse with the white people, that the only remedy against this was to establish Bantu states ruled over by chiefs under the guidance of missionaries, and that such

The Background

Europeans as the missionaries considered undesirable should be excluded from these states.

To-day there is again talk of Bantu states. But not because the natives are in danger of being exterminated. Dr. Philip, as time has proved, was wrong there. No, on the contrary. Because they are so dangerously increasing. . . .

And, as to-day too, the Dutch could not endure it—this continual trouble about colour in one aspect or another. They had their own views on colour. They had been born to them and trained to them.

They brought out, as their fathers had done (but as their descendants cannot do), their white-tilted waggons that could hold a family, and the household possessions of a family; they assembled their kine and their kindred; and once more the exodus began. But now it was an exodus in thousands. This was the very trek of treks, the Great Trek.

Perhaps they were not less free under English rule than they had been under the rule of the Dutch East India Company; perhaps they had, except for the slave business, prospered. But they had trekked even in the old days, before ever the British occupied the Cape, because each man wanted to do as he chose and not as others chose for him, and because, in short, those early Dutchmen were individualists and had a natural hatred of government. And though they must, when one comes to think of it, have been a difficult people to manage, they took justifiable pride in the fact that they were prepared to face dangers, known and unknown, in the cause of independence, and they spoke of themselves, and their descendants do to-day, as the Voortrekkers: those who went before.

Among these Voortrekkers, a boy of ten, was Paul Kruger.

CHAPTER V

I

WHILE the Voortrekkers were moving away, the 1820 settlers were digging themselves in. But each found the same obstacle to progress : the Kaffir.

Now the Kaffir of those days must not be confused with the Kaffir of to-day. To-day the black man is subjugated and bewildered. The white man is his lord, his teacher, his tyrant. He has been broken by the white man, and must be mended by him.

But in the early days of the nineteenth century the Kaffir was a different person.

To begin with, it is really wrong to speak of him collectively as the Kaffir, except as one might speak collectively of the European, saying : " In those days the European acted so-and-so. The European had such and such customs, and these were his features, and those his characteristics," making no distinction between the Spaniard and the Englishman ; the Scandinavian and the Turk ; the German, the Iclander, the Frenchman and the Greek.

The Kaffirs are innumerable in their variations, and are so strictly differentiated, so fiercely tribal, that, to this very day, any member of one tribe may be the hereditary enemy of any member of certain other tribes.

If in these pages, then, the black man is spoken of as a Kaffir, it must be accepted as meaning simply a dark-skinned inhabitant of South Africa who is not

The Background

descended from Bushmen or Hottentots or Asiatics, and is not a mixture of brown and white breeds. It is as general a term as that.

The Kaffir wars history speaks of were not necessarily wars fought by Europeans against a common nation of Africans, and, actually, while the Kaffirs were fighting the Europeans, they were also fighting one another, sometimes with white assistance. The most famous of the chiefs won his name, not as an opponent of white men, but as a conqueror of black men.

2

His name was Tchaka, and by sheer ruthlessness he made of the Zulus a tribe so powerful for war that, as far as the average inhabitant of Europe is concerned, a Kaffir begins and ends by being a spear-brandishing Zulu, and the Zulu himself believes he is the warrior of warriors.

Tchaka was born in 1783, and, to escape the jealousy of his father, who was, no doubt, the natural progenitor of such a son, he took refuge with the chief of the Zulus, and, when this man died, became himself the chief.

Now began a policy which, a century later, was to be heard of again in Europe : the policy of Frightfulness. Tchaka is said to have massacred a million people. If a man sneezed before Tchaka he was put to death, and those who grieved over his fate were made to join him. He compelled men to kill their wives or brothers, and forced women to butcher their babies. He put out of the world, as useless encumbrances, the old women in the land ; and when his own mother died, he induced an adequate mourning among his subjects by slaughtering seven thousand of them. . . .

That his young men might not have their hearts

The South Africans

turned to water in battle, that there might be no wistful looking backwards, they were forbidden to marry; and he himself, though he had five hundred concubines, whom he called, like Solomon in his Song, his sisters, had no wife. Nor would he succumb to the human weakness of paternity. Any of his concubines who bore him a child forfeited her life, and her child shared her fate.

In war there was naturally no quarter. He "ate up" his enemies, and the lands of his enemies. His victorious armies—and he appears to have been a great general—laid waste the countries before them, and spared only such handsome girls and boys among the conquered as were prepared to join their captors. . . .

And so Tchaka went his way, hastening the process of natural selection by exterminating the feeble and assimilating the strong and beautiful.

And he made of the Zulus a great black nation. But he made of them a nation only for war, so that to-day the industrial tribes they despised are further advanced in civilisation than they are. And, although it is possible their warlike spirit finds some assuagement in the fact that the white people prefer them above other natives as policemen and prison warders, and although the cap which they wear so smartly over one ear may be a comforting substitute for the waving battle plumes of old, it is also ironically true that the Zulu men are the best house servants. To this ignominy they have sunk, those leaping warriors whose assegais "ate up" whatever stood in their path—to the cooking of food, and the polishing of floors, and even the tending of babies.

And yet, spiritually, there is still something in them of the conqueror. They know their own shame—"This is coward's work," they say, as they do their duties about the house. And, in their very bearing, they are aristocrats, fallen Lucifers.

The Background

Tchaka was murdered by two of his brothers. The ghost of some old Roman tyrant might have forewarned him of that. One of these two was then murdered by the other. And it was this other, Dingaan, a man not less cruel than Tchaka, who succeeded him. . . .

There are in Natal a river called Blood River, and a village called Weenen—Weeping; and on the sixteenth of December the Union of South Africa celebrates a day which is known as Dingaan's Day. Among the Dutch in the country it is commemorated by services of a religious character. But in Johannesburg advantage is taken of the holiday to hold still one more race-meeting, and the chief event of the day is the Dingaan's Day Handicap.

3

It was Tchaka's brother and murderer, Dingaan, the Vulture, as he called himself, the eater of other birds, whom a section of the Voortrekkers, led by one Pieter Retief, encountered as they made their way into Natal. The only white people in Natal, at that time, were a few progressive and courageous Englishmen, who were allowed to live there because one of them had successfully treated a wound of Tchaka's, and who had, in vain, begged England to take over the country. When the Dutch arrived, there was some talk between them and Retief of setting up a joint republic, but, in the meantime, Retief decided to see what he could do about establishing friendly relations with the amiable-seeming natives. There was some excellent land, which Tchaka had swept almost bare of inhabitants—would Dingaan cede it to them and his friends?

Yes, Dingaan was agreeable—on a condition. If the Dutch would recover for him those cattle of his which

The South Africans

had been taken by a certain other chief, they could have the land.

The cattle were duly retrieved. A thousand white-hooded waggons crossed the Drakensbergen. Retief and a party went with the cattle to Dingaan's kraal. There were mutual compliments paid. The Dutch fired a volley in salute. The Zulus danced a great war dance. Within the kraal a feast was prepared. The Dutch, as was their custom, left their guns in charge of their Hottentots, while they went into the kraal to attend the celebration. . . . They were seized, dragged to the hill of execution, beaten to death with knobkerries, and towards the unprotected camp they had left behind them, at this place we to-day call Weenen, ten thousand warriors swept, and slaughtered the men, the women, and the children.

And Dingaan laughed, satisfied. A Zulu had got the better of them, these white people with the magic who had wanted his land. . . .

The final scene in the tragedy, however, was staged by the Dutch, on this day the anniversary of which we celebrate as Dingaan's Day.

It was again a battle-scene : thirty-six regiments of Zulus, advancing close-packed, with rearing plumes, with shields and assegais and a great battle-roar ; but, against a river-bank, a prepared camp—a laager—of protecting waggons ; with huddled cattle inside, and little children ; with women loading fire-arms ; with men shooting bitterly straight ; with, strategically, a stealthy creeping out of the camp and a sudden attacking from an apparently new quarter ; with a routing of the Zulus and a driving of them into the river which is now called Blood River.

That battle presaged the end of Dingaan. The terrible power which Tchaka had bequeathed to the brother who had assassinated him was seen now to be

The Background

not invincible. As Dingaan had turned on Tchaka, so another brother, Panda, assisted by the Dutch, turned on Dingaan, and, carrying with him half Dingaan's followers, broke him. Dingaan fell into the hands of the Swazi tribe, and was by them done to death. And, as Dingaan had murdered Tchaka, as Panda had betrayed Dingaan, so presently did yet another brother, Clu-Clu, kill Panda.

That was the end of black power in Natal. . . . Now, as the warrior Zulus pass out, let a word be said in defence even of Dingaan. The story is told from only one point of view. Who knows what went through that savage mind? Who can understand what fears of the white man might not have inspired him? "Bulala Matagati"—"Kill the Wizards," Dingaan shouted as he fell upon Retief and his followers. The Wizards. Is not Dingaan's use of that word charged with meaning?

4

The Boers settled themselves in Natal, established a republic, and, in direct opposition to the idea, advocated by the missionary, Dr. Philip, of setting up friendly Bantu states, drove out of the country, crowded into locations, the black men of the land.

This, and other things, the British, after much hesitation, decided they could not bear. These Dutchmen, they argued, were, after all, British subjects. They might follow their offensive and disparaging policy of running away from British rule, but bound by it they were. The independence the Dutch demanded was not granted. England declared Natal a British colony, and, after opposition from the Dutch, occupied it. English immigrants began to come. The black people were allowed to return. To-day Natal is the most British of the Union provinces, and it maintains a tradition of hostility to the Dutch.

The South Africans

But the Dutch made their inevitable retort. They trekked. They had won Natal past the jaws of the Drakensbergen—the mountains of the dragons; they had sown their tears at Weenen, had made a river to run red with blood, and had reaped peace of their sacrifice. But the renewed combination of Briton and Bantu was too much for them. And, having in vain sought to lay their grievances before the Governor of the Cape Colony, they once more abandoned their homes, and, under the leadership of the greatest of the Voortrekkers, Andries Pretorius, they now went towards the Vaal.

5

There were other Boers along the Vaal. Not all the Voortrekkers had followed one route or one commandant. Some had been lost altogether. Many had journeyed towards the land in which Moselikatze, a Zulu chief seceded from Tchaka's rule, had established himself a score of years before.

He had established himself and his followers—Matabele they now called themselves—through the method approved of by Tchaka. The country was laid waste. Within ten years there was not a Hottentot or a Bushman left in the land, and of all the Bechuana tribes settled between the Magaliesberg range and the Limpopo River, only one escaped, and that the weakest of them all, the Batlapins, on behalf of whom the missionary, Dr. Moffat, Livingstone's father-in-law, had gone to intercede with Moselikatze. To something in Moselikatze Dr. Moffat had been able to appeal: to his vanity, or his superstition, or his admiration, or his generosity. Which of us dare, after all, judge the hearts of these black people? It was Moselikatze who showed Rhodes where a great man

The Background

might choose to be buried. In a cave on the Matoppos Hills of Rhodesia sits, upright, the skeleton of Moselikatze, surveying in death the kingdom that had once been his. "What a poet the man was," said Rhodes, and determined to be buried where Moselikatze was buried that he, too, might overlook the kingdom which he had taken from Moselikatze's son. . . .

To Dr. Moffat the Matabele made a gesture. The white man was the lord of this contemptible tribe. Very well. It was not to be touched. The other tribes might be "eaten up," but not the Batlapins.

It was Moselikatze those Boers encountered who crossed the Vaal River a year or so before Retief came upon Dingaan in Natal, and the Transvaal story is not unlike the Natal story: the wiping out of small bands of Boers by hordes of Kaffirs; the vengeance of the guns; the passing of the land—a land including, this time, most of the Transvaal, half the Free State, and the whole of Southern Bechuanaland as far as the Kalahari Desert, but excepting that part inhabited by the Batlapins, the charges of Robert Moffat—the passing of this immense region from the Matabele to the Boers . . . and then, as before, the waving, seeking tentacles of the British Government; and, yet again, a rebellion, a wrenching away from the British embrace.

There were some who were content to remain in a land which called itself the Orange River Sovereignty. There were others who were not. The story of Andries Pretorius, the avenger of Pieter Retief, the leader of the Boers who trekked away from British rule in Natal, and of his son after him, became now a story of crossing and re-crossing the Vaal River; of diplomacy and fighting. And, at last, it seemed to be a story that had some end. These Boers were too determined. There was no staying them. They

The South Africans

would go on trekking. They would trek to the Limpopo as they had trekked to the Fish River, to the Blood River, to the Vaal River. They would trek, as Anthony Trollope said, across the Zambesi if they were pursued across the Limpopo, and across the Equator if they were hindered at the Zambesi. This Africa was too big. Better leave these ungovernable farmers. Let them go across the Vaal if they chose. Let them consider themselves a republic. Let them call it the South African Republic, if they liked the important sound of that. . . .

The foster children of England were at last in a home of their own. Indeed, in two homes. There was not only the South African Republic across the Vaal, there was also, presently, the Orange Free State to take the place of the Orange River Sovereignty, and, with a sigh of weary abandonment, Great Britain gave up also her claim to this land that lay between the Orange River and the Vaal. The Orange Free State was left, rather nervous of its new dignity and the responsibilities it involved, to take its own place in the world.

The internal independence of the Boers living beyond the Vaal was recognised in the Sand River Convention of 1852, that of the Boers between the Orange River and the Vaal in the Bloemfontein Convention of 1854. In this year, too, the Cape Colony acquired its Constitution, and in 1856, Natal, having hitherto been a dependency of the Cape, became a separate colony.

Here then, marked and divided, were the four provinces that to-day form the Union of South Africa : the Cape Colony, the Transvaal, the Orange Free State, and Natal.

Each might now develop, unhindered, its national consciousness.

CHAPTER VI

I

BUT not only the white people of South Africa were, in these days, concerned with their national consciousness. The Hottentots were making their final protest against white domination. The Basutos, under Moshesh, were struggling against the Free State Boers. Even the half-caste Griquas had their aspirations. Throughout South Africa one dark nation or another was struggling in exhaustion against the white man's magic. In those parts where the 1820 settlers had come to make their home, a black people called the Amaxosa were staking whatever they had and stood for on one of the wildest gambles in history.

2

In the year Natal parted from the Cape Colony there arose a Joan of Arc among the Kaffirs. Her name was Nongkwase, and one day, as she was drawing water at a stream, she saw a vision. Spirits of the great dead appeared before her, and told her that the Kaffir millennium was at hand. On a certain day the world would change. The fields would teem with more cattle than a person could count; there would spring up mealies ripe for eating; sorrow would vanish from the land, and sickness; and not again would old age or ugliness affront them.

The South Africans

And there would arise, in all their vigour and battle-pomp, the departed leaders of the old mighty days, and, at the head of an invincible Amaxosa nation, they would hurl themselves, with shields and assegais and great alarum, upon the white man and drive him into the sea. Once more would Africa be the land of the Bantu.

Only one thing was necessary to consummate this glory: Faith. They must believe in the spirits. They must believe in them absolutely and to the uttermost. Let there be no turning away the spirits by doubting the fulfilment of their promise. The cattle would be there on the appointed day, the treasures, the happiness, the victory. Let no man so question this as to dare to make his usual puny efforts against the future: storing grain and herding cattle. He must exhaust the inferior possessions of a world soon to be no more; refuse to plant; eat up his beasts and his grain. He need do nothing now but prepare great new kraals against the arrival of the promised herds, and skins to hold the milk. . . .

Nongkwase stood on the bank of the river and cried aloud the message of the spirits: "Kill! Destroy! Have faith!"

The Amaxosa looked towards Sarili, their chief. "Obey the spirits," he commanded.

Those who believed obeyed the spirits. Those who doubted obeyed their chief. They destroyed their possessions. They ate up their cattle and their mealies, and lay in the sun awaiting the advent of the millennium.

The great day arrived. It came like any other day. It departed like any other day. The Kaffirs stood on

The Background

the hills, with their lean bellies, looking for the miracle. But the fields did not suddenly wave with corn, nor the kraals urgently seethe with animals. Their great dead leaders did not reappear.

And the appetites of the Amaxosa were great, ready, like the kraals, for plenitude.

It was the awful stake. For this Sarili, using the deluded visionary, had—so it is believed—played his game. He would make of the Amaxosa a nation driven by an overwhelming despair. He would throw his chance on that courage which is born of hopelessness. At the point where life and death were one, he would hurl his people against the white man in a last, furious charge.

But Sarili had made one irretrievable mistake. He had not appointed a common meeting-place for the awaiting of the resurrection. He had not assembled his folk in a great gathering. The Amaxosa were scattered over a broad country in famishing groups. It was impossible to call them together. The final throw was lost.

There was blustering talk of a Day still to come—if only they would unite to await it. . . .

But the faith was gone, and gone too were the mealies and the cattle. The Amaxosa had passed beyond anguish to exhaustion. They died in their thousands and their tens of thousands. Those white men whom they were to drive into the sea succoured whom they could, and there were some who ate their dead. But it was the ruin of the Amaxosa nation. It was fate giving a final kick to the Bantu.

Sixty-five years later, not far from the scene of this Great Amaxosa Delusion, as it is called in South African history, there arose, at a place called Bullhoek, another black prophet, and commanded his people to

The South Africans

have faith. They were to believe, this time, not in their savage spirits, but in the God of the Bible. They believed, and gave their blood to prove it. And, as before, but less clear in conscience, came white people to help them.

One might relate the two happenings. One might say: "See, the spirits that they looked to at Nongkwase's revelation were not the same as the Spirit their prophet Enoch evoked, but the spirit within themselves was the same five years ago as it was seventy years ago. These Bantu have not changed." . . .

In the lands desolated by faith two thousand German legionaries who had fought beside the British in the Crimea were given a home.

4

The story of the South African native after that is a story of black controlled by white. In the north, it is true, in the Orange River settlements, Moshesh, the Basuto chief—and probably the ablest, for war and *peace, of all the black chiefs*—was conducting an apparently interminable campaign against the Boers, and, from time to time, there were tribes that rose in rebellion; but there was no longer any question about who owned South Africa. It might be, as Anthony Trollope said, a black man's country, and always had been, and always would be, but the immediate fact was that the white man was in possession of it.

Into corners, across rivers, and over mountains, he was pushing the black man, for ever making new boundaries. Over the big land he was spreading himself. In the north the Boer, accustomed to farm on anything from six to twenty thousand acres, was

The Background

forcing the Griqua (throwing four thousand pounds after him) across the same mountains he himself had once overcome in search of freedom. On a pass in the Drakensbergen, the Bastards of South Africa were perishing in their hundreds, on their way to a home of their own on the other side.

5

Griquas one could call them, or Bastards, it was more or less the same thing. They were a nation descended from the association of white men with Hottentot women. There might be a little Malay blood in them, a little Bushman blood in them, a little casual Kaffir blood; but mainly they were the offspring of Hottentot slavery, of the ownership of one human being by another.

And the missionaries might prefer them to style themselves Griquas—there had once been a Grigriqua tribe of Hottentots—because Bastard seemed a little indelicate as a description of a nation, but the half-castes themselves were not at all ashamed of either their appellation or their descent. They liked to remember that they had white blood in their veins. They were proud to call themselves Bastards. . . .

They had fuzzy hair and a light brown skin and high cheek-bones and a protruding mouth. They were bigger than Hottentots, and slimmer than white people. There was something in them of that blood which urged a man to go wandering and wandering that he might escape restraint.

Along the banks of the Vaal there were little groups of Griquas under one chief and another. Odds and ends of all kinds of half-breeds and fugitives were attached to them. The most important of the groups

The South Africans

were under the leadership of Kok and Waterboer. It is after these Griquas that Griqualand East and Griqualand West are named.

Adam Kok the Third was the chief who was forced to sell his land to the Free State, and who founded a national home for his Griquas beyond the Drakensbergen, and became an ally of the Queen of England. And he was really a romantic figure, this stout little pock-marked half-caste, this Kapteijn Adam Kok, King of Bastards and outlaws and emancipated slaves. Still, it was the other leader, Nicolaas Waterboer, who had assigned to him the more prominent rôle in the pageant of South African history. It was Waterboer who played the part so important in any procession : he was the lay figure, the effigy, the dummy, the man of straw. . . .

For it happened that Waterboer and his followers were, somehow or other, connected with Griqualand West when the first diamond was discovered there in the year 1867; when, three years later, the dry diggings of the Diamond Fields thrust themselves before the world.

PART II

*Modern South Africa and the
Diamond Adventurers*

CHAPTER I

I

THE discovery of diamonds meant the passing of the old South Africa and the birth of the new. And this was the old South Africa :—

A great bare land, sharply picked out in gold and black by the sun, and thinly inhabited by white folk, a land from which its oldest known children—the Bushmen and the Hottentots—had gone and were going. From the north there had come to it savage, but virile and courageous, black tribes; and from the south, Dutchmen and Frenchmen and Germans and Englishmen—and their dependents.

That these people were in Africa at all proved them to be of adventurous and freedom-loving stock. An emigrant is, obviously, for better or worse, an exceptional man in his nation. If he were not, he would be at home with others of his kind.

The Frenchman, who had been urged to South Africa that he might practise the religion he chose, was probably the best of all these settlers, since he had come as a servant of the ideal rather than of the material. Now, however, he was merged in the Dutchman, had clipped the Dutch language, and raised the Dutch temper. Something of German blood and German speech, also, had unobtrusively crept into the mixture. This new type of person,

The South Africans

then, this person standing away from the Europe that had begotten his fathers—from its restraints, but from its culture too—was the Dutchman, the Boer, South Africa had evolved.

The Englishman was, equally, of special quality—a breaker-away from things, a man who had had to fight for a new home instead of sagging down contentedly in the old home.

But between the Englishman and the Boer there was this fundamental difference. The Englishman remembered his old home, felt himself to be but an exiled son from it. The Boer had forgotten his beginnings. South Africa was his home. He had no other home. He wanted no other home. He was not a South African colonist. He was a South African.

That was, and still is, the barrier between the Englishman and the Boer—the quality of the feeling each has towards South Africa. As that quality varies, as the Englishman is prepared, or not, to substitute Africa for England, so is the barrier lowered or raised. To-day, since Africa cannot for ever be resisted, it is being lowered.

And this is the spiritual fact which must be recognised in the relationship between Briton and Boer.

2

Very well, then. The Bushman and the Hottentots were out of it. The Hottentots, however, were not really dead, for they lived in the blood of the half-caste nation that is called the Cape People, mingling there with Malays and Europeans.

They lived in the blood of the still lower race of Griquas, mingling there with Bushmen and Kaffirs, and, again, with Europeans.

Modern South Africa

But, chiefly, there were the Boers, wanting to belong to South Africa, wanting South Africa to belong to them. And there were the English wanting to belong to England, and wanting South Africa to belong to England. There were the Boers escaping from this ideal. There were the English pursuing this ideal, and, in the same pursuit, pursuing the Boers.

At the moment there was a slackening in the chase. Now the English had their two colonies, and the Boers had their two republics; but the feelings that had inspired the English were not dead. They would revive. The chase would be resumed.

3

The Kaffirs were broken. They were no longer warriors. They were serfs. They came now, in their tens of thousands, to work for the white men on the diamond-fields, as they were, later, to come in their hundreds of thousands to work for them on the gold-fields.

CHAPTER II

I

UP to the year 1870 South Africa had been a land of refuge. The only people it had rejected were the convicts England had once tried to settle there.

Now, suddenly, it became the Mecca of fortune-hunters. No more was it a fleeing from the next man's smoke. No more was it a question of wanting twenty thousand acres on which to run a few hundred cattle. No more was it a standstill, meditative life on a stoep, with coffee and a pipe and the Bible on a table in the voorhuis—the front-room. No more was it an affair of a clearing away of the wild beasts and wild men of the land that one might settle near a stream and beget enormous families of giant children, secure from civilisation.

Now it was a new life. Old man du Toit and old man de Beer, who owned the ground on which the diamonds were found, received, respectively, two thousand six hundred pounds and six thousand guineas for their land. They turned their bewildered backs on this urgent, rushing, pushing, struggling, delving madness, and continued the ancestral tradition. They packed their waggons, and they trekked into the veld.

In after years de Beer complained to his wife that he ought to have had, not six thousand, but six million guineas for his land.

Modern South Africa

"But what would we have done with all that money?" asked Mevrouw de Beer. "There are only the two of us, and this house is big enough. We have our front-room, and our bedroom, and our kitchen. What more do we want?"

"We could have had a new waggon."

"We have enough to buy twenty new waggons."

"And a new Cape Cart to go to service—to Nachtsmaal."

"That, too, we can afford. . . . Ach, my little heart, be easy. What have we to trouble about? We have enough."

But old de Beer could never again feel easy. He could not imagine what there was in the world one might do with six million guineas, but he felt it should have been his, and he wanted it.

The men, however, who came to own the de Beers mines knew what to do with money. That was why they were in Africa.

2

What sort of a town do people outside Africa believe Kimberley to be—this Aladdin place where the biggest hole in the world supplies the diamonds for nearly all the engagement rings of four continents? . . . That was how Rhodes calculated his chances in diamonds—why, the engagement rings alone! . . . But how, then, ought Kimberley to look?

Obviously, something like Monte Carlo. Magnificently unreal.

This, though, is the actual Kimberley:—Sandy veld, with here and there a few thorn-bearing trees. No water. Grey-green dumps. Suddenly a little town, with haphazard streets and iron-roofed buildings,

The South Africans

and, on the outskirts, a disreputable location of Kaffir huts—hives made, as often as not, of paraffin tins and old sacking.

It is an ugly little town, and hot and dusty. Gardens grow there under protest because the soil is the kind of soil that prefers diamonds to plants.

On Friday nights—and on other nights too, but principally on Friday nights—the people go to the bioscope. . . .

And conceive, emerging from this, a part of it, millions and millionaires. Even to-day people live in Kimberley who take trips to Europe and send their sons to Oxford or Cambridge. They hold race-meetings. They cling to the edge of smartness. They talk of Society.

This little deformed monster of a place that will not, and cannot, grow because stuff for growth is not in its body; this is that romance of the world: Kimberley. The men who have written their names in gold across the brooding, patient continent of Africa have emerged, like genii, from a hole under Kimberley.

The most notable of them, of course, was Rhodes.

3

At just about the time Rhodes came, with his delicate chest and flaming imagination, to Kimberley, England suddenly again resumed her pursuit of the Boers. And, although one may explain how England took the Cape, how England took Natal, how England took the Orange Free State and Transvaal, because—well, because the Boers had been British subjects, and where they went was, consequently, England—one

Modern South Africa

can only say she took the Diamond Fields as booty that falls to the strongest.

It is difficult, really, to establish anybody's right to Griqualand West. The Orange Free State claimed it as part of her purchase from an Adam Kok who was supposed to inherit it from another Adam Kok. England claimed it on a cession from Nicolaas Waterboer. Even the Transvaal, thinking there was no harm in making the attempt, claimed something. If anyone can imagine the rabble all these Griquas were, how ridiculously they once ruled in their comic-opera state of Griqualand East, he will understand what a farce was this business of their owning and selling and ceding whole kingdoms of land.

But then that has always been a farce in South Africa—the way its great lands have gone from one to another. People with no right to sell have sold to people who knew that they had no right to buy. A group of black men or brown men or white men would find themselves on a piece of empty Africa, and it was theirs. If another group wanted that ground they would (if they could) force them out, and then salve their consciences and solidify their positions by paying the ejected ones something which might well be classed with the peppercorn of English legal tradition. For all the country the Griquas were supposed to own north of the Orange, the Dutch paid them four thousand pounds, though it must, on the other hand, be admitted that four thousand pounds meant a great deal to them in those days. They acquired also from the Swazis the whole rich gold-bearing district of Lydenburg for a hundred head of breeding cattle. Now Lydenburg is the centre of the platinum discoveries. The year 1925 will be remembered as another boom year on the Johannesburg

The South Africans

Stock Exchange, for the flotation of innumerable platinum companies, for the reckless tossing about of hundreds of thousands of pounds. . . .

And a hundred breeding cattle—well!

And then, of course, there is Rhodesia. In 1888 the champagne-loving Lobengula, the son of Moselikatze, “having been much molested of late by divers persons seeking and desiring to obtain grants and cessions of land and mining rights in his territories,” Rhodes and his merry men came to Lobengula’s rescue. They relieved him of the burden of owning mineral rights, and gave him, instead, a hundred pounds a month, a thousand rounds of ammunition, and an armed steamer on the Zambesi. . . .

To Griqualand West the Dutch had just one clear right over the English. Some Boers were living there who paid taxes to the Free State. How they came to be there—how anybody ever came to be anywhere in South Africa—is not the point. This talk of cessions from Kok or Waterboer is mere confusion. If Kok or Waterboer had anything to cede, they hardly knew what they were ceding, or why they were ceding it—they knew only that they were compelled or induced to cede it.

But the Dutch had attached themselves to the soil because they wanted to live there, and the English sought it for what they could get out of it. Having taken it, and pleaded justification in doing so, England put herself in the wrong by offering the Free State ninety thousand pounds in compensation. And the Free State, having denied England’s justification, put herself in the wrong, by accepting the gratuity.

Now Griqualand West was English. Presently, too, the Transvaal was English. In 1877, in the year following the ninety thousand pound episode, Sir

Modern South Africa

Theophilus Shepstone, the Secretary for Native Affairs in Natal, with eight Civil servants (one of whom was Rider Haggard) and twenty-five policemen, rode into Pretoria and annexed the South African Republic. It made him impatient, he said, to see the way the Boers were mismanaging their government. And when England sent him along to inquire politely of the republic how it was getting on, and could she do anything for it—as a Trust might approach a small distracted shopkeeper on the verge of bankruptcy—when he saw how the republic was harassed and unable to meet its liabilities, he used the discretion that had been given him, asked for no further instructions from head office, and said: “We are absorbing you,” and the little shop, without any opposition, succumbed.

Sir Theophilus Shepstone is the greatest native administrator South Africa has had. After England took Natal from the Dutch, he settled eighty thousand black refugees in homes of their own—savages brought up under the shadow of T'chaka and Dingaan—and did not lose a life, black or white. The Zulus called him Somtseu, the mighty hunter, and he was the sort of man who could sit under a tree and listen while they told him, in their own tongue, without assistance from interpreters who “ate up the people’s words,” what was in their hearts. . . . But that it was right of him to annex the Transvaal is another matter. It only remains a fact that he did take it, while poor disillusioned President Burgers said: “I would rather be a policeman under a strong government than the president of such a state.”

At this moment, then, England had both the diamonds and the gold.

But on December 16th, 1880, on the anniversary of

The South Africans

the day on which Dingaan's murder of Pieter Retief and his following had been revenged in Natal, on Dingaan's Day, the Boers proclaimed again their republic, and opened up hostilities against British authority.

Two months after, there was the battle of Majuba, and the Boers regained their independence under British suzerainty.

There are still English people in South Africa who speak bitterly of Gladstone and his Midlothian campaign ; and there were Englishmen in Pretoria who, when they heard the news of the settlement, dragged their flag through the dust of the streets.

CHAPTER III

I

IN this same year in which the Transvaal went to war, Rhodes formed the De Beers company. He was then twenty-seven.

Seven years later he acquired all the holdings in the De Beers mine, and founded the Goldfields of South Africa. And, in 1888 and 1889, his companies, the Imperial British East Africa Company and the British South Africa Company, were granted their charters.

Rhodes might now consider himself the dictator of South Africa.

2

In the course of centuries there arises, now and then, a man who is accounted great because he has that within him which makes him conceive life on the grand scale.

Greatness is, after all, a matter as much of capacity as of performance. An artist is not made great only by a picture he has chanced to paint or a book he has chanced to write. He is a great artist or not in so far as his work is the expression of that which is himself.

There are people who have executed one splendid work, and there they ended. They could do no more. The greatness was out of them. Is a coward

The South Africans

who performs one courageous deed a courageous man? Greatness, like courage, is an inherent quality. The people of solitary distinction are merely lucky people. They have struck treasure. They are not themselves compounded of treasure, so that whatever is dug out of them, although it may be combined with dross, has value. On the Vaal River Diggings, one may stumble on a pocket of diamonds. All the surrounding ground is barren, and there, in a sudden hole, one comes upon a nest—diamond after diamond—as in a dream. And as suddenly as it began it ends. There is no more of it. It is not a Kimberley Mine or a De Beers Mine in which one can go on delving inexhaustibly for a century. It is not a mine at all. One calls it a pocket.

Rhodes, with not less vice in him than virtue, was a big man. That was his quality. His aspirations, his desires, his schemes, his appetites, his admirations, his successes, and his failures were all big.

"I want the big and simple, barbaric if you like," he said, when he was getting himself a home, and he would have about him no little fragile objects, however rare and beautiful they might be. He surrounded his house with fifteen hundred acres of ground, and bought part of a mountain for a background. He filled a vale with hydrangeas. When he wanted to think he sat on a ledge in his grounds from which he could see both the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. The writer he admired was Gibbon. He liked to imagine that he resembled, in feature, the Emperor Titus.

His ambition was bounded only by the limits of the earth: "The extension of British rule throughout the world," he wrote in the will he made at the age of twenty-four. And he, Rhodes, was the man to inaugurate that extension.

Modern South Africa

When he was concerned with diamonds, he amalgamated all the diamond companies. When he sought wealth, he made a million a year. When he entered politics, he became a Prime Minister. When he needed a jumping-off ground to raid the Transvaal, he had Bechuanaland transferred from Imperial to Colonial control. When he went colonising—or, more simply, when he acquired rights over Rhodesia in the name of the British Empire—he added to his interests a land larger than France, Germany, and the Low Countries combined. When he was besieged in Kimberley, he wanted the course of a war deflected to the immediate purpose of relieving him. When he died, he mingled his dust with the dust of a mountain-top. Like the greatest of the Cæsars, he left his possessions to the people.

His manner was large. His way with men was royal. He met a young, unknown architect, decided immediately that he was the man to make a home for him, gave him a free hand there, and sent him “to see Thebes, Pæstum, Athens and the tomb of Lars Porsena” that he might apply to South Africa what he found in Greece, Egypt, and Italy. That was Mr. Herbert Baker, the architect of the Union Buildings, now assisting in the reconstruction of Delhi.

He wanted an expedition led to Mashonaland. He chanced on a young man of twenty-three, called Johnson, who seemed to know what he was about. “How much will it cost?” . . . “Give me four hours,” said the young man; and, after the four hours, came back: “£89,285 10s.” . . . “I accept your offer, and you shall command the expedition.”

But not under the Chartered Company, the young man stipulated.

Rhodes thought it over, and yielded the point.

The South Africans

"Everybody tells me you are a lunatic, but I have an instinct you are right and can do it."

His largest gesture of all—that he might hear the grievances of the hostile Matabeles, and exact from them concessions—was to stake his life on the honour he himself had helped to reduce, and, with three friends, to attend their council in the depths of the Matoppos Hills.

"It is peace then?" he asked finally. "How do we know that it is peace?"

"You have the word of Somabulane—of Babiaan, of Dhliso, chiefs of the House of the Kumalo."

The chiefs laid down their sticks as a symbol of surrendered arms.

"It is good, my children. Go in peace."

"Hambe gahle, aminduna."

"Hamba gahle, Baba."

3

But he was large too in his influence for evil. "When he stood upon the Cape Peninsula," said Mark Twain, "his shadow fell on the Zambesi." But not for good alone. He soiled charity. "Philanthropy—plus five per cent.," he said. He denied integrity. "Every man has his price," he said. He despised freedom: "I object to the ballot *in toto* . . . because I like to know how a person votes," he said.

He was boundlessly arrogant. "Mr. Rhodes," declared Jan Hofmeyr, that man whom the Dutch call Onze Jan—our Jan, and who had, at one time, believed that he and Rhodes might work together for a great South Africa,—“Mr. Rhodes has been spoilt. He imagines himself a young king, the equal of the Almighty.” . . . And so, like Lucifer, he fell too,

Modern South Africa

destroying more than men—destroying the faith of men.

And he cared for men (excepting only the one whose too impetuous and mistimed obedience ruined him—Dr. Jameson), he cared for them just as they were subservient to his aims. If his amiability was the condescension of an emperor, his Imperialism was the expression of an autocrat. “We must adopt a system of Indian despotism in our relations with the barbarians of South Africa, so that by means of it there may be a possibility of creating a United South Africa stretching to the Zambesi.” (“A very reasonable man,” said Sir William Harcourt. “He only wants two things. Give him Protection and give him slavery and he will be satisfied.”)

He lowered the standard of public life in South Africa, and, staking his ideals on the wild gamble that culminated in the Boer War—the Jameson Raid—fell with a crash that maimed for ever the spirit which, enlarged by prosperity, was found, in adversity, to be not unconquerable. “What am I to do?” he cried to Jan Hofmeyr after the Raid. “Live it down? How can I do it? Am I to get rid of myself?”

He could not live it down. He could not get rid of himself. He had hoped to emulate Shepstone, who had so casually taken the Transvaal not twenty years before; he had hoped to achieve his end, and then to smooth over his means. “I am just beginning my career,” he said with bravado. But he had ended his career, and he knew it.

“Happy?” said Rhodes. “I happy? Good God, no!” He indicated General Booth. “I would give all I possess to believe what that old man believes.” . . .

The South Africans

“Everything in the world is too short,” he told Lord Rosebery. “Life and fame and achievement, everything is too short.” . . .

He lay in a little cottage near Cape Town, facing the Indian Ocean, dying at forty-nine. “So little done, so much to do.” . . .

But to-day there exists—what he wanted : a Union of South Africa within the British Empire.

And, as his body was being lowered into the rocks of the Matoppos, the black men he had charmed and robbed and charmed again gave him the royal salute : they saluted him, alone among white men, as they salute their kings.

CHAPTER IV

I

IT was on the diamond diggings at Kimberley that tens of thousands of those natives, who had had their land taken from them, and who had lost their chief occupation of fighting, were given their first experience of modern industrialism.

They came from the conquered territories of Africa, they came hundreds of miles on their hard, pale-soled feet, that feared neither the hot earth nor the stones and thorns and burs, to work for the white man's magic. Two or three pounds a month they were paid (and nothing has changed so little in South Africa as the black man's rate of pay), and they were given their food and lodging. And they saved their money to buy rifles and ammunition. They knew what fire-arms were. They had seen the assegai of the Kaffir vanquished by this magic of the European. It was the dearest treasure a man might have.

When they had bought their magic, they returned home. No man stayed very long at work.

2

But not only for the Kaffir was it, these days, a different life. It was a new life for all South Africa.

Suddenly, on the empty veld, there had sprung up a town second, in human extent, only to Cape Town—

The South Africans

which was already over two hundred years old. In the year that Rhodes formed his De Beers Company, the population of Cape Town was 30,000; that of Kimberley 18,000. To-day Cape Town is seven times as large as it was in 1877, but Kimberley has only doubled its population. Nor is it any longer the second town in South Africa—Cape Town itself holds that place now. Kimberley comes eighth. And it will go down and down, like the little town of Barkly West, about twenty miles away from it, which was the centre of the river diggings before Kimberley became the centre of the dry diggings. There are no opportunities in Kimberley to-day.

3

The river diggings are, in South Africa, the final stronghold of individual adventure. There men still come, as they came over half a century ago, with their capital of either hope or despair, to search for luck under the ground. They do not often find it.

All along the banks of the muddy Vaal River there are camps of diggers. Some camps are older than Kimberley or Johannesburg, others are the derelicts of a "rush."

This is what a rush means:—Diamonds have been found on private property. Because the owner of the property is not also the owner of its minerals, the ground can, if the Government so decrees, be thrown open to the public.

Then, on a day, comes the mining commissioner, and proclaims the ground a public alluvial diggings. A pistol is fired, and the aspirants race, with pegs bearing their names, and ready pointed for planting in the ground, to the claims of their choice. The

Modern South Africa

man who first pegs off the ground which, according to varying provincial laws, constitutes a claim, owns it. He pays the Government a licensing fee, and the owner of the ground a percentage. . . .

The alluvial diamonds are found only tens of feet down where mine diamonds are found steadily through thousands of feet, but they are worth, carat for carat, three times as much as the mine diamonds; and there have been times when, owing to the control in the sale of mine diamonds, alluvial diamonds have shown also the larger annual turnover.

Nevertheless, hardly any digger ever makes a fortune. To the rushes there come men with the joy of adventure in them. These do not remain. But there come also men—and they ultimately form the digging population—for whom the workaday world holds no place: men who have never been trained to a regular trade; men who cannot, or will not, work; men who are not made for civilisation.

There are gentlemen on the diggings—there are gentlemen everywhere. But the diggings—and particularly the newer ones—are, chiefly, in plain language, the refuge of those people we call in South Africa “poor whites.” These are people who, corresponding to the same class in the United States, have fallen below the minimum dignity that, in a world of black folk, is demanded of a white skin.

There the diggers live then, on the Vaal River, and many of them are in a condition of that declining shame which, reversing Mr. Shaw’s axiom that “the more things a man is ashamed of, the more respectable he is,” must mean the steady abandonment of respectability. They are not ashamed of anything. They are not ashamed to live in one room of corrugated iron. They are not ashamed to have no money.

The South Africans

They are not ashamed to get drunk. They are not ashamed to take a black woman and beget a half-caste family. They are, indeed, in a way, supermen: above social law. Nevertheless, respectability is, by contrast—at least, respectable.

Yet, even on the diggings, ideas have changed. The poor whites manage as best they may, living their blighted lives on the diggings as they would anywhere else, scratching inexpertly, and with desperate hope, at the ground. But, on the older, settled diggings, there is a standard of work maintained. River digging is no longer inevitably a simple matter of owning a cradle-like sieve called a “baby”; of a few picks and shovels and tubs of water; of a shaft in the ground, a windlass, a piece of tin for sorting the gravel, and two or three Kaffir boys, or no boys at all.

To-day there are diggers working in big open holes they call paddocks; with large gangs of “boys”; with complicated machinery; with buckets sailing up and down wires in the air; and, on the ground, trucks running on rails; with sometimes, even, an engine. There are big men who support little men. There are shopkeepers who advance money for the working expenses, and receive in return, if they do not lose on the gamble, a share in the profits. There are diamond buyers coming, on certain days, with their motor-cars and their chauffeurs and their flags which they run up above their little iron buying-sheds, and they, too, are sometimes interested in digging ventures.

And, of course, a man may pick up a stone worth a thousand pounds. He may. But what, in actual practice, generally happens is that months will pass, and the small digger, picking his futile way through the ground, will find nothing; and the big digger,

Modern South Africa

with his heavy expenses, will find a few diamonds, but they will barely pay for his boys' wages. . . . Yet each will have just enough luck to delude hope. . . . And, after thirty or forty years, the young digger has become the old digger, and that is the end of the whole affair.

Money is not made on the diggings. Still, the life has its advantages. It is extremely democratic—any white man is as good as the next white man, and so, more nearly than anywhere else in South Africa, is sometimes the coloured man. It requires no training or capacity. It is so healthy that, for all the sandy, arid, débris-dotted uglinesses diamond diggings are, people find it difficult to die there. And it is aristocratically idle.

Anyone who thinks of the diamond-digger as a brawny, sweating labourer is ludicrously wrong. It is among the idlest ways of living. The digger is sun-burnt, certainly, because he sits in the sun. But he sits, most of the day, on his heap of ground, watching his Kaffirs work. He does here and there a little odd job. Once or twice a week he spends an hour or so sorting gravel for diamonds. When he feels bored, he walks over to the bar and has a drink. Sometimes he plays cricket or football.

And there are people who, weighing the evil against the good in this way of living, beg the Government not to proclaim the platinum diggings as they have proclaimed the diamond diggings. . . .

In locations, on the fringe of the diggings, their shameful hovels breaking out on the face of the hills like the disease from which most of them suffer, live the Kaffirs. They are among the most degraded of Africans. They are the corruption of civilisation.

Yet, to this extent, they maintain the tradition of

The South Africans

their forefathers. They are, in general, law-abiding and honest.

Only a little diamond—sometimes (it is a hard life for a Kaffir : the belly is empty, and the legs are like reeds, and the family is big at home, and generously supplemented with the derelicts of other families)—a little diamond he will sometimes steal from the claim of the digger for whom he is working, and sell it, for a small price, to someone else.

This transaction is commonly referred to in South Africa as I.D.B.—Illicit Diamond Buying. It is, like Illicit Gold Buying and the illicit selling of liquor to natives, one of the grave crimes in the South African calendar. There are few things for which a man can be more severely punished than for the unlicensed possession of an uncut diamond or unwrought gold.

CHAPTER V

I

THIS stringent protection of the gold and diamond industries is a bitter protective measure. It may seem, on the face of it, a mad injustice that, because a man has been found with an uncut diamond and no licence to hold it, he may be sent to prison with hard labour for a long term of years, and heavily fined in addition.

But the stealing—the buying—of gold and diamonds cannot be compared with any ordinary criminal transactions. One knows one's other possessions. If they disappear, one can discover their absence, and perhaps trace their course. One can identify them.

But here is a digger, working and working his claim (or, rather, paying and paying for the working of it), and he does not know what diamonds, if any, there may be in it, and he cannot tell whether they eventually come to him, or whether a Kaffir has not picked up one or two of them in the course of his work, and sold them to someone else. Who is to say in what claim those diamonds were discovered? Who can establish the elusive chicanery?

When there is at last a reasonable suspicion, when the suspicion grows towards certainty, a brutal, but inevitable, legal method is followed. A native in the employ of the police is sent to trap the Illicit Diamond Buyer. He offers him a trap stone, the buyer is

The South Africans

frequently caught red-handed, and, upon conviction, is, in these days, awarded much the same punishment as English law inflicts on a dangerous house-breaker. But, in the early times, the sentence might be anything up to seven years' hard labour on the new break-water that was being built in Table Bay. And no less severely is illicit traffic in gold amalgam handled.

Now the mines have greater control over their diamonds and gold than the alluvial diggers; but yet, there was a time, before Rhodes insisted on confining the native workers in compounds, when hundreds of thousands of pounds were lost annually through the theft of diamonds. In one year alone it was estimated that diamonds to the value of nearly three-quarters of a million had been stolen. The Kaffirs secreted them between their toes, in their woolly hair, in their ears, in their mouths. They even swallowed them. Still to-day, before they leave the compounds for their kraals, is a strong purgative administered to them.

The compounding of natives is a procedure suggesting slavery; and, since they can buy only from De Beers Company, Kimberley has derived practically no commercial benefit from the presence of these thousands of workers. But diamonds no longer disappear as they used to do, and the natives are, at least, well-fed and sober.

One can live in Kimberley for twenty-five years and never, unless one makes the deliberate effort, see a native mine-labourer.

This arrangement about the natives and a hundred other things became possible when all the mines in Kimberley were consolidated under one control.

Modern South Africa

2

This was in 1888. In the year before that Rhodes had bought out all the shares in the mine called De Beers. Barney Barnato, the vivid young adventurer who, as Barnett Isaacs, had come to Kimberley a few years after Rhodes to sell to the excited and overflowing fortune-hunters his stock-in-trade of sixty boxes of cigars, was trying to do the same at the Kimberley Mine. To this, in little more than a decade, the young Whitechapel Jew had come—to the handling of millions.

Now they each said, Rhodes and Barnato, that the holdings in the mines had to be amalgamated, and others agreed with them. It was becoming impossible for men to work side by side, sometimes on only a few feet of ground, at the bottom and on the sides of these largest holes in the world without inconvenience and angry dispute.

Anthony Trollope describes a mine-scene as he saw it in 1877 :

“ It is as though you were looking into a vast bowl, the sides of which are as smooth as should be the sides of a bowl, while round the bottom are various marvellous incrustations among which ants are working with all the usual energy of the ant-tribe. And these incrustations are not simply at the bottom, but come up the curves and slopes of the bowl irregularly. . . .

“ The stuff is raised on aerial tramways ” (wires for carrying buckets up and down). “ As this is going on round the entire circle it follows that there are wires starting everywhere from the rim and converging to a centre at the bottom, on which buckets are always scudding through the air. . . .

The South Africans

“ But the most peculiar phase of the mine, as you gaze into its one large pit, is the subdivision into claims and portions. Could a person see the sight without having heard any word of explanation it would be impossible, I think, to conceive the meaning of all those straight but narrow dykes, of those mud walls all at right angles to each other, of those square separate pits, and again of those square upstanding docks, looking like houses without doors or windows.

“ You can see that nothing on earth was ever less level than the bottom of the bowl—and that the black ants traversing it, as they are always doing, go up and down almost at every step, jumping here on a narrow wall and skipping there across a deep dividing channel as though some diabolically ingenious architect had contrived a house with five hundred rooms, not one of which should be on the same floor, and to none and from none of which should there be a pair of stairs or a door or a window.” . . .

Imagine this condition of affairs accentuated by years of further exploitation to such an extent that a man could barely work without encroaching on his neighbour, that the pumping out of water was becoming an impossibility, that ground was continually falling in. There had been one such fall involving millions of cubic feet of reef, and the entombment of innumerable claims. . . .

Diamond mining had passed the period of the small man.

3

It was in these circumstances that Rhodes and Barnato and others of their kind went about buying up claims. But there was still a further stage. There was the question of controlling the whole system of

Modern South Africa

diamond production ; the engineering of output and prices. Rhodes wanted to be the man to do that. So did Barnato. It became a rivalry in the buying up of claims.

The final scene was staged in Dr. Jameson's cottage in Kimberley between the Briton, Rhodes, and three Jews. One, Beit, was on Rhodes' side. Barnato had with him his nephew, Woolf Joel.

It was Rhodes who won. He might now do what he liked with diamonds. Those great holes might now be systematically exploited, with labour-saving machines, with schemes involving the working of millions of tons of earth, with great plates of vaseline to catch diamonds, with trays bearing oily-faced, glittering fortunes, with a peremptory holding-back from a market and an equally arbitrary releasing of them, and a standing up in Parliament to speak with one mouth concerning a whole industry. . . .

De Beers Consolidated Mines meant all the diamond mines of Kimberley, and an outstretched hand towards diamond mines wherever they were found in Africa. It meant also the ruin of Kimberley. There is probably no town in the world so completely subservient to a solitary industry. Here we have the most complete trust on earth.

To this South Africa had come, whose land had been opened by men seeking to escape from control. . . .

But, indeed, that South Africa had died on the day when old du Toit sat in bewilderment on his little dung-smear'd stoep and watched the over-running of his ground by an urgent concourse of adventurers, coming on horseback, on foot, by ox-waggon, with pick and shovel and shout and argument and the firm offer of seven and sixpence for the perpetual freehold of a claim whose value was beyond computation.

The South Africans

And now it was not only diamonds, it was gold too. Those same men who had lain sprawling with snatching hands over the Diamond Fields were now on the Gold Fields. There was one in particular, a man called Robinson, whose destiny in the declining years of a long life was to be the fighting of lawsuits relating to events of a generation back, and he was beating even Rhodes at the gold game.

About three hundred miles from Kimberley, nearly a thousand miles from Cape Town, there lay the Witwatersrand—the Ridge of the White Waters.

PART III

*Modern South Africa and the
Gold Adventurers*

CHAPTER I

I

JOHANNESBURG, as everyone knows, is the heart of the gold industry. That means, to people in Europe, a mining town. There are educated Britons who really believe that in Johannesburg one may meet men in their shirt-sleeves, with revolvers and gold nuggets in their pockets, issuing in and out of gambling and drinking dens with ladies of easy virtue. That is how mining towns are. They know. They have read Bret Harte.

And not only have they read Bret Harte; they have read more modern novels too. There is that most popular of lady writers who stages an effective South African scene in a South African gold-mine. The heroine is trying to elude the brutal hero, and he is pursuing her through a gold-mine. Very interesting reading it makes to anyone who has ever seen underground workings. . . .

Then there is a description of Johannesburg in a recent novel by an author of standing :

“One thing . . . she noticed . . . in the hotel on the morning after their arrival.

“‘What’s that roaring noise? . . . It can’t be only the traffic, surely?’

“‘Oh! The battery-stamps,’ he said. ‘The stamps that crush the ore, you know.’

“‘Does it go on all day?’ she inquired.

The South Africans

"He nodded. 'It gets so that you don't notice it after a time,' he explained.

"Yet, in the five years of her life in Johannesburg, she was never quite unconscious of that perpetual background of noise throughout the long working hours." . . .

And, of course . . . on a very still night . . . in some parts of the town . . . when the wind is blowing a certain way . . . it is possible to hear a distant murmur like the far-away beating of waves against a shore; and that murmur is the crushing, crushing, crushing of the ore by the battery-stamps, the whispering end of that noise in whose immediate presence the ears grow tight and the voice falls dead. But it is a noise no louder in the life of Johannesburg City than the beating of a heart is loud in the body it inhabits. Those battery stamps *are* the heart of the Rand, but they are as secret. One does not hear their throbbing except when the blare of living is hushed.

But Mr. H. G. Wells, who has never seen South Africa, in *The Research Magnificent* comes surprisingly near the kind of Johannesburg that periodically breaks through the crust of everyday convention.

2

Johannesburg dates from the year 1886. Then Rhodes, describing "its wonderful climate, its facilities for work, and its enormous auriferous deposits," quotes the spreading view that "the Rand is the biggest thing the world has seen."

To-day, in this year of 1925—that is, in less than forty years after its inception—Johannesburg is the largest town in the Union. It has a population of about 300,000.

Modern South Africa

3

To people who do not know South Africa it is probably much the same kind of thing: Kimberley or Johannesburg. Each is a fairy-tale place. Only one happens to be a diamond city and the other a gold city.

But there is a great difference between Kimberley and Johannesburg. There is this difference: Kimberley is dead and Johannesburg is alive.

Johannesburg has not the mountains and the seas of Cape Town, which make its situation one of the most beautiful in the world. It has not the spick and span prettiness of Durban, flaunting itself a little obviously over the Indian Ocean. It has not the deep-rootedness of Cape Town, the self-respecting solidity of Pretoria, or the demure charm of Port Elizabeth. Most of its public buildings are failures.

Its tastes and ideals are crude. Despite its University, it has no coherent cultural life. It plants, symbolically, in close forests, the straight, quick-growing blue-gum tree which it presently cuts down for mine-timber, where the Cape, two hundred and more years ago, planted oaks that live to-day. It has greater faults than any other town in Africa. . . . But it is alive. For good or evil, things happen there. From its restless vitality spring the excitements and the movements of South Africa. Johannesburg is ardent and urgent. It spurs men to ideas, to action, to competition. There is electricity in its atmosphere. The people that walk about the streets walk differently from other people in Africa. They speak differently. They think differently. It may be, as Rhodes said, the auriferous deposits, the climate, the facilities for work; it may be that, in a sunburnt land, six thousand

The South Africans

feet above sea-level is the ideal height for human endeavour; but, whatever it is, there Johannesburg exists, quick and strong, and, whether one loves it wholly or not, there is no town in South Africa in which it is better to live.

4

And its citizens know it. And they do live.

Evidence of that is in its homes. However Johannesburg may fall short publicly, it has a domestic pride. The suburbs of Johannesburg are full of beautiful houses and beautiful gardens. Nowhere else in South Africa except, perhaps, in Pretoria, are people as interested in their gardens. There is hardly a self-respecting cottage without its lawn, its flowers and trees.

On the series of rocky ridges on which Johannesburg stands are its best houses, white or of stone, with roofs tiled or thatched or shingled. The ridges run so that a man may have a street at his front door and a valley at his back door—and a view of forty miles of country rimmed with mountains.

The rocky ground on which his house is built is blasted with dynamite so that grass and plants may grow, and, down the hills, gardens straggle away into the landscape. Gardens mature swiftly in Johannesburg. A forest is the work of but a few years' sunshine and rain.

But, of course, there are parts where houses are crammed hard together in tight-packed streets, and there are slums shameful to consider in so young a town. Not everywhere in Johannesburg may the ideals of Mr. Herbert Baker, the architect Rhodes "discovered," be applied.

Next to the Huguenot who first built those old

Modern South Africa

Cape houses which are the country's pride and inspiration to-day, there is no one who has done so much for the beauty of South Africa as Herbert Baker. . . .

And yet, Baker house or no Baker house, cherished garden or not, a man seldom stays long in one home in Johannesburg. Within a few years all the inhabitants of a street are changed. Some very good reason they have for moving. They want to be nearer the schools. They want a larger house, or are reduced to a smaller one. Property is booming and they cannot resist the temptation to sell. The fashionable quarter is shifting. . . .

It is amusing—and morally, if not technically, instructive—to read in the 1911 edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* a list of the fashionable suburbs of Johannesburg. Only one of the eight is a fashionable suburb to-day; and even that is not as securely aristocratic as it used to be. Of the others, two or three are already far down the scale. And every few years a new fashionable suburb springs into being.

In the old days the best parts of Johannesburg were wherever the mining magnates chanced to live. To-day there are not many authentic magnates left in Johannesburg. Lesser men are their deputies. Nevertheless, the tradition of "mining people" still holds Johannesburg in thrall. To this extent Johannesburg, like Kimberley, remains a mining camp. Its authority and aristocracy emanate from the mines. Neither blood nor brain matters in these towns as much as gold and diamonds.

There are streets in Johannesburg significantly called Gold Street, Quartz Street, Banket Street, Claim Street, Nugget Street.

The South Africans

5

And that there is a well-defined social life in Johannesburg let no one doubt. The decorous middle-class woman may be gambling in gold or platinum shares on the Stock Exchange; the liftman's mother may, for the last twenty years, have been a regular race-goer; all sorts of odd little men may be company directors in this or that kind of mining activity; there may be black houseboys instead of white housemaids or no servants at all; but the life that is led in Johannesburg is essentially and decently bourgeois.

Johannesburg, that has been called a Sodom and Gomorrah, and a University of Crime—and, like any human being, has self-consciously enjoyed the reputation of its wickedness—is an eminently respectable town, as respectable as any South African town, more respectable than a European town; for South Africa, on the whole, stands morally high. Tradesmen work at their jobs from eight to five, and clerks from nine to five. People who can afford motor-cars (and it is said that houses are mortgaged that cars may be bought) use them; but the others go, soberly, by bus or tram, or, perilously, on their motor-bicycles.

In the afternoon ladies call and leave cards. They work for church bazaars, are interested in Children's Welfare and Fallen Girls; and their fashions are half a season behind the London fashions. After five the husbands come home and potter in their gardens. . . .

There is talk about school examinations, about cricket and football matches, about tennis and golf handicaps. There are social clubs where a contemporary Jesus Christ would be blackballed as he would be blackballed in any club of standing throughout the

Modern South Africa

world. There are a Y.M.C.A., and a Y.W.C.A., and a Rotary Club, and slogans and other Babbitry. There are Hunt and Automobile Clubs. There are—beside the Friday night theatre audiences who go on to cabarets, and the Saturday night mining audiences—the regular first-nighters. There are people who speak of Debussy and Matisse rather than of Beethoven and Botticelli. There are people who hate Indians and Jews and Bolsheviks. There are people who prefer *The New Statesman* to *The Spectator*, and they form the usual proportion to those who read *The Daily Mirror*. There are monthly accounts and life-insurance policies. . . .

And—smash!—we are back into a mining camp again, with its sudden, bewildered wealth—there are fifty—seventy—a hundred thousand pounds worth of motor-cars, in long rows, attended by white-coated Automobile Club officials, standing outside a two-shilling bioscope theatre.

6

So there they are in Johannesburg: the hurried civilisation; the whirl around; the rising to the surface and the sinking to the dregs.

Up on the ridges, among their gardens, facing their views, live the people who have made money; and, running out of the city, past signboards bearing Oriental names, past shops dwindling from wholesale to retail, past Native eating-houses, and Indian tailor-shops, in crazy sheds of discoloured corrugated iron, swarm the squalid humans, of all nations and colours, who have fallen to the bottom. The Europeans who live there are the poor whites—those people who cannot maintain a white standard. They have come

The South Africans

to Johannesburg because there is no work for them on the land. In Johannesburg, they have heard, a man, without money, without training, without capacity, without moral purpose, can make a living. And they clamour for unskilled work or for relief, and they huddle together in the slums of Johannesburg.

And when that restless, reckless mass of men, lying in a cordon round the pleasant city; when those miners, living hard and fast because so, in the old days, when almost inevitably, phthisis trailed at their heels, life on the mines had been instituted; when the growling hound springs suddenly up against his enemy, then those poor whites come out of their hovels and join in the fight.

We have had—in 1913, in 1914, and in 1922—terrible strikes in Johannesburg. And there are other strikes coming.

A mile under the ground there are tens and hundreds of thousands of half-naked savages, grunting as they work and work, who have been recruited by agents from far-away kraals. They are hammering holes into the rock for dynamite charges, their black, naked torsos are glistening with sweat along corridors a mile, two miles, long. Water is dripping everywhere in the mine, naturally or artificially, that it may wash down the mine-dust, the silica, that does not now, as once, so hungrily eat up the life of the miner. . . .

There are a quarter of a million white people and a million black people dependent on the working of the mines.

The value of the gold taken out yearly is about forty million pounds.

There have been over three thousand miles of ground excavated.

All round Johannesburg, and along the Main Reef

Modern South Africa

Road, the richest road in the world, whose sixty miles run over the gold-mines of the Reef, there are hills that shine in the sunlight like tarnished silver. They are the mine-dumps, the refuse of stamp-mill and cyanide-tank.

There are no things in Johannesburg more wonderful than the mine-dumps ; but there are times when they look, not silver-like, but cerement-pale : ghostly. There are times when, in the light of the moon, they seem to be the dead selves, the spirits of the mines—the gold, their life-blood, gone from them—gazing down desolately on the urgent world they have left behind them.

CHAPTER II

I

It was said, a few pages back, that from the restless vitality of Johannesburg sprang the excitements of South Africa.

Johannesburg was not a decade old when its existence fired the Jameson Raid. It is not necessary, in these days, to say much about the Raid. There can be few people who justify it. The simple truth is that Rhodes wanted a United South Africa under the British flag, and had arrived at that stage of unhindered success where a man regards it as his duty to the world to have what he wants. Nor did its gold make the Transvaal seem less desirable.

Now again, in 1895, as in 1877, when Shepstone annexed the Transvaal, the country was unsettled. There were eighty thousand foreigners in the Transvaal—they outnumbered the burghers, so Kruger said, by four to one; and for that reason, with Rhodes at the back of their consciousness, they aspired to a due share in the government of the country; but for that reason too, and again with Rhodes as a background, Kruger was afraid to let them have it.

And not only that, even among his own Boers there were people becoming too disagreeably modern in their demands. Why could he not go on governing his country like an old Biblical patriarch? There he sat on the stoep of his little house, which still

Modern South Africa

stands in Pretoria—such a small, shabby house; and the citizens came to take coffee with him and have a chat. And no one was so poor or so insignificant but he could walk on to the stoep with his pipe and his *veldschoenen*—his veld-shoes—spitting where he chose, and be the President's friend.

And the President himself—four times a President—of course, he had his faults: he was an obstinate, wily, reactionary old man; and, of course, he is ennobled in history by the tragedy of his final years—yet he was Oom Paul, the uncle of his nation. He was a burgher as they were. He had come to the Transvaal with the Voortrekkers, herding, at the age of ten, his father's cattle. He had gone into commando against the Kaffirs when he was fourteen. He had taken up, at sixteen, two farms to which he was entitled, and, a year later, had driven his horses across a torrential river to seek a bride. He was a widower before he was twenty-one, and, on remarriage, the father of sixteen children. His Bible was his only education, except for three months under one Tielman Roos (to-day another Tielman Roos is Minister of Justice, and one of the most powerful men in South Africa). His life was the life of the old Testament. He might have been Abraham himself: he had the same kind of guile, the same kind of outlook.

Here, taken from his memoirs, is a discussion between him and Moshesh, the wily old Basuto chief. Is it not a conversation that goes back to Biblical days?

“‘Are you the man,’ asked Moshesh, ‘who fetched Mapela down from his mountains?’

“‘Yes,’ I said.

“‘Are you aware that two of my daughters were

The South Africans

married to Mapela? . . . You need not think that it was your courage that brought Mapela down from his mountains, but it was the dispensation of God that punished Mapela. . . .’

“Now, as Moshesh was at every moment speaking of the dispensation of God, and using pious words, I said to him :

“‘But if you are so devout, how do you come to have more than one wife?’

“Moshesh replied :

“‘Yes, I have just about two hundred; but that is not half so many as Solomon had.’

“‘To which I made answer :

“‘Yes, but surely you know that, since Christ’s time, and according to the New Testament, a man may have only one wife.’

“Moshesh reflected for a moment and then said :

“‘Well, what shall I say to you? . . . It is just human nature!’” . . .

Imagine such a conversation taking place in modern diplomatic Europe. Imagine the patriarch Abraham pitted, not against Chedorlaomer, the King of Elam, or Tidal, the King of Nations, but against Rhodes, against Milner, against Chamberlain.

To Kruger, on his stoep, came men hunting for concessions. The Government needed ready money, and he gave them. To Kruger, with his straggling chin-beard, and his little sore, pouched eyes, and his thumbless hand, on which he had himself operated, and his snapped-to mouth, came men wanting modern systems of government, men talking and thinking and living gold. . . .

Gold! It was not that Kruger, any more than Abraham, despised wealth. But gold and gold-seekers, these he found to be the ruin of his Transvaal.

Modern South Africa

Jameson opened the year of 1896 by surrendering himself and his filibusters, as Kruger called them, to the Republic. The jumping-off ground Rhodes had intrigued for; the arms sent through his De Beers and lying in a Johannesburg mine; the scheming in Johannesburg itself; the rising there in preparation of Jameson's assistance—they had all come to nothing. And Rhodes with them.

But Jameson lived to be Prime Minister of the Cape Colony; even as a general, convicted of high treason in the rebellion Botha put down in 1914, lived to become a Cabinet Minister of the Union.

2

And then, of course, the last stage in the pursuit of the Voortrekkers, the climax of the Raid, the final annexation: the Boer War. That was still, old Kruger believed, fired by the gold of Johannesburg. And this is the letter which Sir Henry—afterwards Baron—de Villiers, Chief Justice of the Union, wrote to Sir Wilfrid Laurier concerning the war:

“I quite agree with you that President Kruger ought to have displayed more liberality towards the new-comers, but I fear that the exaggerated and distorted accounts which had been sent over of Boer oppression have affected your judgment in the same way as they have affected the judgment of the great majority of the British people. ‘The policy,’ you say, ‘of admitting settlers simply to make “helots” of them is intolerable.’ I have travelled a good deal over the world and have nowhere seen a more flourishing people than these so-called ‘helots’ were before the war. They looked with utter contempt upon the President and his people, and I quite agree with

The South Africans

Lionel Phillips that the great majority of them did not 'care a fig' for the franchise. . . . Chamberlain, of course, did not wish for war if he could attain his objects without war, but those objects were utterly inconsistent with the continued independence of the State. No British colony enjoying responsible government would have borne with the interference with its internal affairs to which this nominally independent State was being subjected. The negotiations should be read by the light of the historical events which preceded them, and if so read I cannot understand how any impartial person, with any sense of justice or fairness, can support Chamberlain's action. . . .

"You suggest in your letter that I should try to influence the leaders of the republics to put an end to a needless war. . . . Knowing, myself, the benefits of British rule, I should be very glad if I could induce the Boers to submit and cordially accept such rule. But with these people the preservation of their independence is a sacred mission. It may be a foolish sentiment, but I cannot help respecting it. To us it may seem foolish and indeed wicked to prolong a war which can have only one issue, but to them submission, especially after the declarations of the British Government, probably appears to be nothing short of a crime. . . ."

However, that is a quarter of a century ago. The end has triumphed over the means. And, although there are many Boers who cannot forget the past, there are also many who shrug their shoulders and think philosophically: "Well, let England call this Union hers. We shall bear it. For, in effect, it is ours." And the truth of it is that neither Britons nor Boers have got exactly what they hoped to get, and yet the best possible thing has happened. There

Modern South Africa

is growing up to-day, not an English colony, nor a Dutch reserve, but a South African nation. . . .

On the centenary of Kruger's birth, Englishmen, no less than Boers, came and said that he had been a great man; and it is now possible for a South African of English descent to remark jocularly about Majuba: "Oh, that's the place where we knocked hell out of the English, isn't it?" . . .

3

And the tale of Johannesburg goes on. It was to Johannesburg, to work in the mines, that there were brought the Chinese coolies. . . . As if there were not Kaffirs enough without land or occupation in Africa, as if Natal, with its Indian coolies and its Indian problem, were not there to give a dreadful example.

But Johannesburg was not Durban. The Chinese were sent back to China. For although in England the talk was in horror of "Chinese slavery," it was not only the moral, but also the physical, aspect that concerned South Africa. Indentures had an end, but the begetting of children went on. The Transvaal could not afford to become Orientalised as Natal had been. There were enough poor whites in the land.

And yet it was in Johannesburg again that the Indian Passive Resistance Movement of Mr. Gandhi was born. Here he came to learn the lesson he afterwards tried to enforce in India. The Indian question as it affects South Africa will need more than casual comment, but this, at least, may be mentioned now: it was not in London, but in Johannesburg, that Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi learnt to hate British government.

The South Africans

4

And then, the Labour Movement in South Africa . . . its centre is Johannesburg. The reason for that is plain. Nowhere else in South Africa is there so large a body of white workers. We have no important factory towns. We have no great industrial organisations except the railways and the gold-mines on the Rand.

And throughout the rest of South Africa classes are blurred, but in Johannesburg there is this large, sharply-defined group of people: the mine-workers. They do the same thing. They want the same thing. And they give power to other workers too. There was a time, not so very long ago—and such a time may come again—when it had but to be whispered, “The miners will come out in sympathy,” and the employers hurriedly gave in to the workmen. Sometimes Johannesburg admits it, and sometimes it doesn’t, but the truth is Johannesburg is afraid of its miners.

There was a terrible strike in 1913, when miners, with a rabble of poor whites following them, came, threatening, into the streets of Johannesburg, setting fire to a newspaper office and a railway station, massing themselves about a social club. That strike ended physically, but not spiritually, when a number of the strikers were shot down.

There was a strike again next year, which was cut short by the proclamation of martial law, and the deportation, without trial, of nine Labour leaders.

And, in 1920, seventy-one thousand black mine-workers also put down their tools. They had discovered the new kind of warfare.

Modern South Africa

In 1922 there was a strike which went beyond a strike, which went deeper than a question of wages. It was the miners who came out, but the strike was as much social as industrial in its nature. It was a crisis, not only for Johannesburg, but for South Africa, a matter, actually, of who should rule the country: the owners, or the forgers, of wealth.

It was, in short, a revolution; an attempt to divert property rights and to change control.

CHAPTER III

I

THERE is no such thing as the power of the mass. It is always the power of the individual. And the mass is the instrument of the individual: powerful as a field-gun is powerful, as a steam-roller is powerful under a directing will.

What is the mass? It is a great ball gathering material and momentum as it is prodded along by a toe—sometimes in a hob-nailed boot, sometimes in a patent-leather shoe.

Johannesburg has known the force of the hob-nailed boot as well as the more insidious manœuvring of the patent-leather shoe.

At the municipal station, which supplies Johannesburg with electric power, there work certain mechanics. They receive the wages of mechanics, but they are very important, for, if they choose, they can leave the town without light or locomotion or any industry dependent on electric power. And so, more than once, they have done. It has already happened that they have thrown out the Mayor and Corporation, and, for a matter of a few days, have run the town themselves. Once, when a tramwayman was suspended for three days on account of insubordination, all the tramwaymen were called out, and, for a fortnight, Johannesburg walked.

Modern South Africa

That strike was lost. But there were other strikes. Periodically the householders of Johannesburg laid in large stocks of candles because the Power Station was making trouble. Sometimes they filled baths and utensils with water under the threat—which, however, has never yet been fulfilled—that the water supply would be cut off. Every now and then they overstocked their larders for fear of what the railway-men might do. All kinds of meek workers, from house-painters to tea-room girls, went through their lives in a state of being “pulled out,” and then laboriously pushed back again.

The town accustomed itself to walking on tip-toe; resigned itself to inconvenience and instability; to trouble and loss. After all, it was Johannesburg, and Johannesburg was like that: a place where strange things happened.

If only (the people whispered to one another), if only one thing did not happen. If only the miners did not come out again.

And, in 1922, they did so. They came out with talk of the Colour Bar, of keeping black men (working at a tenth the wages) out of white men's places; they came out flying the banner of a white South Africa. But their strike was developed under the patronage of the Power Station.

It grew until it was a general strike, until it was, as the Judicial Committee of Inquiry subsequently described it, a revolution. The strikers were drilled, were formed into commandos, were led by “generals.” The women burst recklessly through the organised fury of the men. It came to it that trams were stopped, shops shut, homes besieged; that there was fighting all along the Reef; that the Defence Force was called out; that there was Civil War. . . .

The South Africans

There were rumours of lists of too-prominent people destined, in due course, for execution; of a scarlet robe and a black cap of justice. One no longer spoke of strikers, but of Reds, of Rebels, of Revolutionaries. They had the appurtenances of warfare. They had also—and did not take their advantage—Johannesburg itself. Excepting the railway stations, the law-courts, and a few central streets, they had complete control of the city.

But the mass was not directed aright; the hob-nailed boot blundered as it pushed. It urged the mass forward too slowly. The opposing mass had time to organise itself: the Defence Force, the Citizen Force, the Burghers, the Constabulary had time to concentrate on Johannesburg. General Smuts rushed up from Cape Town. Aeroplanes, machine-guns, field-guns, opposed rifles and home-made bombs. The strike, the revolution, was over. The doctors and grave-diggers did their work. The miners—such as were now wanted—went back to their mines, and took what wages they could get. The tramwaymen stood in queues waiting for places, which, even at heavily reduced wages, were no longer available for many of them. There were trials held, and men sent to gaol.

To-day, however, there are none of the rebel leaders in gaol. There are rebel "generals" in Parliament; there is a man convicted of high treason, and he has been given a Defence Force appointment. . . . "The Minister said he had made up his mind that he was going to treat the Rand Revolt just in the same way as those other affairs were treated in the past, just as Sir Starr Jameson had been looked upon after the Raid as a person fitted to occupy a high post. . . ."

The retort seems adequate. . . .

[]

Modern South Africa

But there is one man who led, during the Revolt, an attack which ended in some terrible deaths, and when he came out of gaol, work had to be found for him too. He was offered nine pounds a month by the Government to take charge of a desolate guano island, and he accepted the offer. For him, it seemed, there was no other place in the world but this birds' dung-heap in the Atlantic Ocean.

CHAPTER IV

I

So that, then, is Johannesburg too. There is the controlled civilisation of Europe on the surface, there is the primitive unrestraint of Africa beneath. That is why it is exciting to live in Johannesburg: not because of what the eye can see; not because miners walk about its streets in their shirt-sleeves with gold nuggets in their pockets; not because it is a University of Crime, or a Sodom and Gomorrah—not for these mere fictions, but because it is a town palpitating with contrasts and uncertainties, because there is a live germ of growth in it.

From their careful pockets people take money that Johannesburg may manipulate it. From the old settled towns of Africa families uproot themselves and come to Johannesburg to look for opportunities. The young men who qualify for professions put up their names on Johannesburg door-plates, for the work there, and the intellectual strife. The poor whites from the country hope vaguely that, in some inexplicable way, they will become in Johannesburg paid employees and useful citizens. The emancipated young Zulus and Shangaans leave their kraals to look for civilisation as they go from gate to gate in the Johannesburg suburbs, touching their aged hats and saying—what is often their one word of English—“Job.” . . . They are not, unless they can get their passes extended, allowed to live in a Transvaal town

Modern South Africa

for more than a week if they have no employment—they must find work or leave. And so they trail up one street and down the other, in their second-hand European clothes, until they find the sanctuary of service.

The tourists who visit South Africa enter its gates at Cape Town, see its glory of mountains and sea, and say: "Yes, this is certainly one of the most beautiful sites for a city in the whole world. But the city itself—well, well, nearly three centuries old, you tell me, and the legislative capital of the Union. Really, how interesting!" . . . and in due course they catch the Union Express, and thirty hours later they are in Johannesburg; and just one minute after they have left the shabby corrugated iron sheds which, for a little while longer, must serve Johannesburg as a passenger station, they take breath and declaim: "This is a city. Now this feels like a city."

It is not that Johannesburg need be proud of itself as a centre of beauty—it has used money and opportunity for its public buildings and business houses to little artistic advantage: the contrast between the domestic and the official architecture in Johannesburg is amazing—but it has a habit, an air, it makes the impression of a metropolis.

There are some who say that, with its population of three hundred thousand, of whom about half are black or brown, Johannesburg has more the character of a great town than almost any provincial centre in England.

And yet, for all its individuality, Johannesburg is English. It is English in the sense in which it is said in South Africa: "This is an English town. . . . This is a Dutch town."

Cape Town itself, for so long the capital of a British

The South Africans

colony, is not as English as Johannesburg, the heart of what a quarter of a century ago was a Dutch republic. It does not even speak English so well or so consistently.

Towns like Pietermaritzburg, the capital of Natal, and Durban and East London and Grahamstown are, of course, entirely English. They were deliberately settled with British immigrants. The descendants of these immigrants are aggressively English in Durban and complacently English in Grahamstown. In this great, hot, black, desert continent they behave as if they lived in a tight-packed street, in a little old village, in a misty, ancient, tradition-laden island off the continent of Europe.

Pretoria, again, is half English and half Dutch; and, the Witwatersrand apart, most of the other towns in the Transvaal are Dutch. Bloemfontein used to be English. It alone, in the whole Free State, sent a "Smuts man" to the House of Assembly. To-day, however, despite some struggling, Bloemfontein is being gathered into the Nationalist bosom. General Smuts' party has not a single Free State representative.

2

It is extraordinary how towns differ in South Africa.

There is Johannesburg, and between thirty and forty miles away there is Pretoria, and they might be in different continents, they are so far apart in spirit.

Pretoria is the administrative capital of the Union. For half the year the business of government is centred on Pretoria. Yet there is an air of peaceful detachment in Pretoria that Johannesburg has never, for a moment, known. (Probably, in a little way, it is the difference that exists between New York and Washington.)

Modern South Africa

Perhaps it is that Pretoria is cupped by hills instead of looking down from them ; but, certainly, the heat there is physical rather than spiritual. It goes its decent, steady way. It is the foothold of Cabinet Ministers and not of mine magnates, of Civil servants and not of Labour agitators. There are, proportionately, more Civil servants in the Union than in any other part of the British Empire. . . .

The gossip in Pretoria is about people being superseded in the service rather than of shares going up or going down. Theatrical companies come first to Johannesburg of all towns in South Africa because in Johannesburg the big business is done. But they are not sure that they do not get in Pretoria the subtler artistic appreciation.

There is money and fun and good dressing and exhilarating competition in Johannesburg, but there is an attractively-dowdy and simple little aristocracy in Pretoria. People may not have the newest clothes in Pretoria, but they have the oldest memories.

Pretoria possesses in the Union Buildings, which houses the Government officials, the most beautiful building in South Africa, an outstanding modern building, indeed, in the world, and its Government House (both are the work of Mr. Herbert Baker) is considerably more attractive than some of the English royal residences. It has also the handsomest square.

3

Money, however, need not be despised. There are not (despite the fact that Johannesburg possesses an art gallery, built by Sir Edwin Lutyens, and containing pictures selected by Sir Hugh Lane) many people in Johannesburg who know much about the arts. But the pictures that are painted in other towns in South Africa are brought to Johannesburg

The South Africans

to be sold. Generally they are sold by auction. An artist paints his forty pictures a year of hills bathed in pink and mauve dawns and sunsets; of seas and the Cape mountains; of the old Malay quarter in Cape Town; and then he brings them to Johannesburg and they go to the highest bidder for anything from five to fifty guineas.

South Africa likes its own painters and it likes its own scenery. Futurist painters need not come here. The human form is not seen on South African walls, nor do South African artists pay it much attention. An average English R.A. would not do very well here. South African landscape is the thing. And now, lately, the Kaffir is being tentatively introduced.

There is little of this painting being done on the Rand. The centre of pictorial art is Cape Town.

4

There is, after all, something in this being old. Cape Town has a respect for culture. It possesses the finest library South of the Equator, an art gallery, and a museum of antique South African furniture. It attempts a mild Bohemianism. It talks about the latest books. It supports a municipal orchestra which has had the courage to tour England. It respects its professors. In Johannesburg a university professor is nobody in particular. In Cape Town, which is building its university slowly where Johannesburg built one in a hurry, he has a social status. And in Cape Town books are bought, and it is considered the right thing to attend concerts.

There is also a tradition of family in Cape Town. Some of its people possess great-grandfathers. It is true we have no aristocracy in South Africa—unless, perhaps, a Kaffir chief may be considered an aristocrat, with his hundred wives and his autocratic power over

Modern South Africa

his tribe—we have no feudal landlords and idle rich, but still there is something of what Oliver Wendell Holmes considered family: “Four or five generations of gentlemen and gentlewomen. . . . Family portraits. . . . Books. Original plates. Original editions. . . . Some family silver. . . . Claw-footed chairs. Black mahogany tables. Tall bevel-edged mirrors. Stately upright cabinets. . . .”

And although these people round about Cape Town have not been the real makers of South African history, nor do they much affect its present and future, yet their ancestors had a feeling for architecture, a dignified taste in furniture, and a delight in beauty, and for that inheritance, at least, South Africa may remember them.

There are old things in Cape Town, and the sense of time.

And there is the most wonderful bathing beach in the world that has been converted into an eyesore, beside which Brighton is dignified, for the delectation of trippers. And there is a marine drive of unsurpassable grandeur. And there are two oceans thrashing its shores, and mountains guarding it against the oceans' vehemence. And there is a great level mountain over which the mists settle—as it is said—like a table-cloth. . . .

But at the foot of this mountain lies a city that has refused to be beautiful.

And the people who walk about the streets of Cape Town are, to nearly the extent of one out of two, the fruit of the white man's possession of dark-skinned slave-women.

5

In Durban the people are, half of them, Indian, and the other half English.

The English combine, very frequently, and rather

The South Africans

surprisingly, a Methodist creed with a 'Tory outlook. And, again surprisingly, although Durban is the reactionary stronghold of the Union, it is also a powerful Labour centre. It has a neat and gay appearance, a sub-tropical background, and an anxiety at its heart. It does not know what to do with the Indians it began to bring on itself sixty-five years ago, and it is nervous of what the rest of the Union may decree about its natives. Already—considering Zululand as a part of Natal—over forty per cent. of Natal is inhabited by natives. They are afraid in Durban that South Africa may consider Natal to be the inevitable home of the black man.

In the meantime, Durban is a progressive port, somewhat given to over-charging. In the middle of the year Johannesburg visits it on holiday, and its July Handicap is the racing event of the year in South Africa.

After Cape Town and Durban the only other ports of consequence are Port Elizabeth, and, some way behind, East London. Both are advancing towns, and are trying to capture Christmas holiday-makers; and Port Elizabeth has industrial aspirations, and, among its other activities, now assembles Ford motor-cars.

Grahamstown divides itself in serene seclusion between its schools and churches. Bloemfontein is the most democratic town in South Africa. Until quite recently its vegetable market emblematically formed the central square of the town. But conferences are held in Bloemfontein, and it is the seat of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

This last is Bloemfontein's share—as capital of the Free State—of Union privileges which resulted from the National Convention.

PART IV

Living, in South Africa

CHAPTER I

I

WHATEVER one knows well has a meaning. The human heart seems to throb thicker and quicker in Mr. Bennett's Five Towns than in Mr. Bennett's London. To its inhabitants probably every South African village has its secret quality. But, in fact, there is no peculiar town in South Africa, except Johannesburg, which, for that strange living germ in it, has its special place in the world. . . .

And, what is more, a man may spend his whole existence in South Africa as untroubled by its savage spirit as if he were an inhabitant of a London suburb. There are people who have never gone out of the land, and they have not, for a moment, touched the primæval nakedness of creation that is Africa. They have never stood before a violent and desolate landscape thinking: "This is the world God contemplated when on the seventh day He rested and there was not a man to till the ground. I am Adam, the first man, and alone. This was made for me. In all the Universe there is not another living soul. . . . Nor, except in a Zoo, have they ever seen a wild beast. Nor have they watched a thin trickle of a river drowning in a flood of thick brown water, contemptuous of the bounds of Nature. Nor have they seen a veld fire running like a swift red animal along the hills, eating up the land. Nor have they felt the earth

The South Africans

tremble beneath the loud and syncopated stamping of black men, dancing as one to the rhythm of the land, monotonously, insistently, maddeningly, chanting their deep choruses with barely-moving lips. . . .

There is a mystery, a sense of slumbering fate, about Africa that grows with one's life in the land. But yet in the towns one can dwell in a semi-detached cottage, and, by day, go to work on a motor-bicycle, and, at night, visit a bioscope, thrilling to the inanities of Hollywood, and never feel that one is in an exotic atmosphere. One can live, if one chooses, just like a lower-middle-class Englishman.

When the South African visits England, he laughs to himself at the simplicity of the questions the English people ask him—even people with a university education. "Do you see wild animals where you are?" (Cape Town or Johannesburg). "Have you met my sister? She lives in Nairobi" (a few thousand miles away). "Do South African women dress in the evening?" "Are your newspapers printed in English?" "Do you see any of the better-class English weeklies and monthlies?" "Are you interested in good books and advancing ideas?"

To tell the truth, South Africans coming from the bigger towns often feel a little patronising towards provincial Englishmen. The provincial Englishmen seem to them rather backward and unenlightened; as if they were tight-shut in old homes and old conceptions, and had never gone out into the sun and seen things by the light of day.

It is, of course, possible to satisfy, in England, social and intellectual and artistic demands that are beyond fulfilment in South Africa; but middle-class folk have opportunities in a dominion that would not be open to them anywhere else. And, again, men

Living, in South Africa

and women of no particular standing in England seem to lose their social timorousness when they leave it. The mere fact that, at home, their lines were firmly drawn excites them to aspiration in a part of the world where they are not hampered by the old restrictions, and have not been known for generations as being this or that person's inferior.

And then, quite naturally, just as the South African feels superior towards the average Englishman, so the average Englishman feels superior towards the South African. The man from the younger world finds himself fresher and keener than someone from the older world, but the person from the older world lays stress on his tradition. It is the authentic relationship of parent and child. Each patronises the other.

When, therefore, English-born folk come to settle in South Africa they claim a more important place in the sun than they ever ventured to expect at home, and yet, on the other hand, they are confronted by a scale of living that secretly surprises them. To-day there are not, as in the times of the Dutch governors, sumptuary laws in South Africa. People have what they can pay for (and sometimes what they cannot pay for), without regard to their station in life. Shop-girls travel first-class on trains, and are taken, by their young men, to the best seats in a theatre. Typists lead the full social life. Coloured servants travel second-class. Any sort of a person has a motor-car. A baker's daughter or a tailor's daughter has full opportunity to dance with the Prince of Wales when he visits the country. Not much more is necessary than to write one's name in the visitors' book at Government House to be invited to State functions.

The South Africans

There is certainly a something called Society, but it is a shifting, arbitrary group, including or excluding without very definite reason—except when, as has been indicated, a town is built up on a specialised foundation: as in Johannesburg the mines, or in Pretoria the Civil Service. In the smaller towns, of course, the magistrate, the bank-manager, the doctor and the solicitor are the social leaders, and the bank-clerks and Civil Servants are the young men about town.

There are no idle rich in South Africa. There are no leisured classes. There are no upper classes. There are no lower classes. Some people naturally believe themselves to be better than others, and, according to their tastes and occupations and surroundings, make distinctions. But, on the whole, South Africa is—excluding the poor whites and the natives—a middle-class country, and the complexities and differentiations of its social life weave themselves in and out among the professions, and the agricultural, commercial and manual pursuits.

2

The fact that there are no leisured classes in South Africa prevents also the incidence of a deep culture, and so again does the alluring climate. All the year round one may divert oneself in the open air. About the Cape Coast it rains in Winter, but in the north it rains only in swift, quickly-drying bursts, in Summer, and on the east coast there is practically no cold weather.

So, although football and cricket follow the seasonal conventions, tennis and golf may be played throughout the year, and almost every day. On Sundays;

Living, in South Africa

on Wednesdays, when the shops close ; on Saturday afternoons, when most other workers have leisure, it is not usual to find a healthy, youngish person at home. Everyone is out on a motor-car or a motor-bicycle ; or a cricket or football field, a tennis court or a golf course ; or, in the country (but not as frequently as is generally supposed), on a horse.

Innumerable people have private tennis courts. There are women who regularly play tennis five or six times a week. Even Kaffirs have their tennis and cricket and football clubs.

But, except at the Cape, walking is not customarily regarded as an agreeable form of exercise.

In such a life then, where men, if not women, work, where the air and the sky offer hourly temptation, the forcing hand of ennui does little to encourage profound thought and the arts to flourish. A South African looking at London through its fog and drizzle understands well why the mind is set going there. Something must move, if the body cannot, that existence may have its reason.

On the other hand, if there are not people in South Africa whose lives are all ease, there are not many who are completely deprived of it. To begin with, one has room in South Africa. One may stand with arms akimbo. Then there is the Kaffir. He does all the hard and ugly work. So that if the mind cannot be as completely freed in South Africa as it is in a European country, it is also seldom as constricted. The greatest development may, accordingly, not be attained here, but a more general development is possible. It is very likely that the average intellectual standard is as high in South Africa as it is anywhere else. It probably compares quite favourably with that of, for instance, Boston, the seat of New England culture,

The South Africans

whose population equals the white population of the Union. According to a report in the *New York World* of July 12th, 1925, just two copies of Thomas Hardy's books were sold in Boston during the first six months of the year. . . . And the South African who has gone overseas with romantic ideas about finding there a culture denied him in his own country returns home feeling that, after all, a human being is a human being, and may be met, kind for kind, if not so frequently, in South Africa not less than in Europe or America.

It is true, of course, that he cannot, in South Africa, stand and worship before old buildings and treasures and lovely forms and pictures; and here, if he aspires to paint or model or design, he is denied example and inspiration. But, for the rest, the average South African loses by necessity only what the average European loses by choice.

There are in London seven and a half million people, yet a South African may go through a London art gallery and, in his perambulations, meet only—a fellow South African.

As for news, as for books, as for thought, the cable and the mail bring them to him within a day or within seventeen days.

Sooner or later, too, though, unfortunately, all theatrical enterprise in South Africa is in the hands of one trust, the best English plays, and even, occasionally, the best English actors and actresses, come to South Africa. And here again, since the cultivation of taste cannot be as deliberately pursued here as in Europe, the finest critical appreciation may be lacking; but yet, since life itself is easy, the average of intelligence is comparatively high, and on the whole Cape Town or Johannesburg audiences are not less fastidious than are London audiences.

Living, in South Africa

This fact may not be indicated by dramatic criticism in the local press, for the tradition on South African newspapers is : "The poor people have come a long way. Give them a decent word ;" but the man who pays his half-guinea for a stall has no such tendernesses. He sets expenditure against pleasure, and expects, if not a credit balance, at least no loss. The only inferior things South Africa bears amiably are musical comedies and revues, and cinema pictures. On the real stage, however, it expects, but does not often get, good mounting, and, not uniquely, it demands a well-known name in actor rather than in author—though, even then, it reserves the right to turn its back on a reputation. Paderewski, for instance, it did not like—it saw no reason why a man should be arrogant towards people whose money he took. And so, from Olympus, Jove thundered, and heard no echoing clap.

Nevertheless, South Africa does still bear traces of its immaturity. Theatrical companies, even musical comedy companies, must, from leading lady to back row chorus girl, be brought from across the water. That is, the public must be told so. Actually, South Africans do sometimes fill minor parts. Suspicion attaches to a show that is eked out with South African legs or larynxes. There is a fear that expenditure is being controlled. This, South Africa thinks, is not the genuine article. It is cheap, home-made, not imported.

There was a time when the same self-distrust applied to every aspect of South African life : when the stern and honest furniture of the Voortrekkers was despised, and tortured bits of wood came from overseas to warp and crack in the sun of Africa; when no one would buy South African jam or blankets or books. Never, even at the height of her reputation,

The South Africans

did her own country do anything but marvel at the success of Olive Schreiner's *Story of an African Farm*.

To-day these things are, to a large extent, changed. Its own actors and actresses South Africa still does not want, but that is almost the last phase of national self-depreciation. It now buys its own manufactures. The stinkwood furniture that the old Dutch made is fetching two or three times as much as it used to do. An auctioneer has but to mention the word "stinkwood," and there come eager and excited buyers who would not stir for the oak or mahogany or walnut of Europe.

South African pictures also, as has been said, need fear no competition from overseas rivals. These, indeed, have no value here. They are not understood and they are not wanted.

Even its own writers, as far as the booksellers will permit, South Africa now reads. And that is quite a recent development—a matter of a year or two. There is, indeed, an amusing patriotic tendency to read vaguely "a" South African book, as there is to buy "a" South African picture, rather than any particular book or any particular picture. As for works in Afrikaans, they are regarded by the Dutch with veneration.

The most frequently practised of all the arts, music, shows the least attainment. Still, that will come. An extraordinary number of children are taught the piano—extraordinary even by European standards. Something may grow out of this fury of absorption. For it is not inevitably true that taste is born. Taste is, as a general rule, created by intimacy, by habit and by imitation.

Living in South Africa

3

But in one respect South Africa fails. It is, considering the size of its white population, and the division of that population by language (which makes a further classification by taste very difficult), not badly served by its daily newspapers. But South Africa publishes no serious monthly review, or even a popular magazine. There have been two attempts made to maintain monthly publications neither too heavy nor too light for a person of fair education and general understanding. They were better than the ordinary English magazine, but they failed through lack of support, not so much on the part of readers as of advertisers. The business men could not imagine why anybody should want to read a local production if one might buy, for fifty per cent. more, popular English monthlies, or, for two or three hundred per cent. more, the solemn heavies. Nor can the booksellers accustom themselves to the curious desire South Africans are showing to read, not about Texas, but about the Transvaal.

Now South Africans stand in queues on mail-days, waiting for the English papers, which cost here from fifty to a hundred per cent. more than they do in England.

4

Journalism is not a calling much favoured in South Africa. Not many South Africans have wistful cravings after what are, in fiction, understood to be the Bohemian excitements of newspaper life. The young men who go through the universities want to do something more profitable, and the result is that

The South Africans

the staffs on the bigger English-medium papers are largely composed of overseas men, and it is almost traditional that the editors shall not be South African.

And yet the universities are sending out more men than the country can absorb, and so are the training-schools.

Every European in South Africa begins at a step above his natural level. And he has to begin like that. For at the base of existence, thrusting the white man upwards, stands the Kaffir. And, at the same time, the Kaffir is uncivilised and underpaid and has few wants, and the result is that the whole structure of life is too thinly supported, and there is danger in the overcrowding at the higher levels.

And then, too, it has, step by step, become possible for a South African to qualify for any kind of profession in his country. At the four universities the student may attend courses in arts, science, law, commerce, music, education, divinity, agriculture, public health, public administration, economics, medicine (including dentistry), veterinary science, engineering in half a dozen branches, African Life and Languages. Nearly all these studies may actually be pursued at one or other of the two universities of Cape Town and the Witwatersrand, but what it amounts to, in practical effect, is that a man can become a barrister, an engineer, a doctor or a dentist without lifting foot from shore. And where, a few years ago, there were not enough doctors in South Africa because a diploma had to be sought overseas, and that meant the expenditure of a thousand or fifteen hundred pounds, to-day the country is in danger of being flooded with desperate, home-trained young doctors for whom there will not be enough work. So, too, the comfortable status of lawyers is already

Living in South Africa

threatened, and there is insufficient work for engineers. As for the Civil Service, its attractions are only limited by the comparatively poor pay and the restriction of bilingualism.

5

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But just as there is more professional and vocational training going on than can be fed, so there is not enough lower education.

The fault lies not so much in man as in the land itself. Primary education falls under the control of the four provincial administrations of the Union, and is fostered to the extent of being free and compulsory, but, except in the towns, there is always the question of space. Children cannot get the schooling they ought to get. At distances of thirty miles apart there will be living two or three families. On transport waggons there will be sitting a man, his wife, his children and his household possessions—trekking in search of pasture for his beasts. Wandering over the country, slinking into the towns, there are the elusive poor whites.

And it is only because they cannot be reached that South African children show, in the statistics, a backwardness.

6

There are some who say that the dual language question also hinders education in South Africa. And, from the purely English point of view, it does. It is obvious that a child trained in an Afrikaans-medium school—if such a one happens, by circumstance or choice, to be his destiny—will not get as good an English foundation as he might at an English-medium school. But there are Afrikaners who do

The South Africans

not consider the thing from a purely English point of view. They prefer, they say, to develop through the language which is intimately theirs; they reject the English literary heritage; they claim, not unity, but merely relationship, with the Dutch of Holland; and they demand to be regarded as their own ancestors.

There is an increasing adherence to Afrikaans. Now every new applicant for Government employ must be able to pass a test in both official languages, and it is desirable to the point of necessity for a South African child to know Afrikaans as well as English.

7

The general tendency of education in South Africa is towards the useful rather than the decorative; towards the scientific rather than the classical.

And there is a great, and not altogether unjustifiable, faith in examinations and certificates.

CHAPTER II

I

It works back again to the relation between leisure and culture. Use rather than taste is the tradition in South African schools, and that is perhaps not unnatural in a young country.

And yet, in one important aspect, South Africa is far from immature. It shows an excellent development in its homes and its way of life. Houses are simple and comfortable, and even, quite often, beautiful. The gimcracks of twenty or thirty years ago stand only as monuments to the past. People will not buy, or complaisantly rent, the hot-looking red-brick villas with the turrets, the juttings, the passages, the coloured-glass doors and the narrow wooden verandahs that assisted at the marriage of their fathers and mothers. Paper-hung walls have given way to walls washed in white; over-mantled and over-mirrored green or red tiled fireplaces to open hearths outlined in stone or in the small bricks called *klompjes*; curtains of coarse machine-lace or velvet to those of silk or linen or cretonne; linoleum or carpet covered floors to polished floors and rugs. Very few houses of the newer, better sort have not a certain amount of built-in furniture: shelves, cupboards, book-cases, window or fire-place seats, wash-basins. All have verandahs, and some have sleeping-porches.

The furniture is, as a rule, of teak, badly and

The South Africans

hurriedly made in local factories. But good hardwood pieces may be bought very cheaply in the country or very expensively in the towns. The tendency is towards a simple solidity. Fragile or painted furniture is not seen. People with money collect antiques, pictures, old Persian rugs, interesting pottery and metal-ware. Houses, above the poorest class, are detached; generally, but no longer inevitably, single-storied; and with lawns or gardens.

Big houses are not usual; are, indeed, a bad investment. The range is from four to eight rooms—excluding servants' rooms. A house of over eight rooms cannot be readily sold or let. Even wealthy people demand nothing more. It is not, as in Europe, a question of servants or reduced incomes. It is an innate, unconscious craving for the simplification of life.

2

There is less difference between the way poorer or richer people live in South Africa than there is in England. The poorer people live above what is customarily considered their station, and the richer people, since there are not enough of them to form an exclusive class, have to accommodate themselves to the standards of their less well-to-do associates. Whatever overseas folk may think, there are not many millionaires in South Africa, and few people with large inherited incomes. The fortunes that have been made out of mining have generally been carried to London; and, for the rest, although very respectable incomes are common enough, industrial and professional opportunities such as obtain in the greatest cities of the world are lacking.

It is, accordingly, a society without a wide range,

Living, in South Africa

and with demarcations not so clearly defined as in other countries. The less well-placed person may, quite reasonably, be linked by a common friend to someone in much better circumstances. And, in this way, habits and traditions are passed from one to the other.

But what chiefly accounts for the interlacing of the social lines in South Africa is, again, the fact of the black man. That, immediately, except in the case of the poor white, who falls outside ordinary discussion, compels a certain standard in the white man. And then the gulf between black and white is so wide, so terrible and irreducible, that, by contrast, no other division seems of fundamental consequence. To four-fifths of South African humanity the least white man is as much a lord as the greatest. And although things which are superior to the same things are not necessarily equal to one another, yet between one lord and another lord there can only be as much distinction as exists in a common peerage.

Between individuals, of course, the world-old differentiations are exercised; but, seen from the outside, all that is sharp and clear is the block-like division of white from black.

3

And not only socially, but also economically, is life easier in South Africa than in England. If prices are, on an average, a third higher here, wages are almost exactly double. If rent, bread, potatoes, milk, and a number of other things are cheaper in England, meat, sugar, eggs, fruit, vegetables, and coal are cheaper in South Africa. And, quite certainly, a better meal is provided in a Johannesburg restaurant for one-and-six or two shillings than may be had in London at double

The South Africans

the price ; though, on the other hand, hotels generally in South Africa are bad.

And then, South Africa is the land of fruit. Visitors to the country may not realise it, and South Africans themselves know of it chiefly by hearsay, for only that fruit which is unsaleable in England is kept for home use, but there is not a fruit, whatever the land of its origin, that cannot be luxuriantly grown in South Africa. . . .

Of the more important towns, the cost of living is lowest in Port Elizabeth and highest in Pretoria. Cape Town stands midway. Johannesburg and Durban are near the top.

4

But forget now people, forget barter. It is for what South Africa, the land itself, means to them that South Africans can be happy nowhere else.

To live in South Africa is a sort of training in greatness. It is not a country of lesser things : of brooklets and sown fields and singing-birds ; of spring and autumn ; of intimate content. Brooks do not go on for ever in South Africa. As often as not they are dry. Birds do not merrily twitter. There is no spring. There is no autumn. A dust-storm blows and brings the rain, and it is winter. A dust-storm blows and brings the rain, and it is summer. No seasonal vaguenesses. No stepping-stones. Summer. Winter. . . .

But plant trees, and in a few years there stands a forest. Let the rain come, not the gentle, the creeping, the insidious rain of Europe, but the bold, hard, beating rain, with its lightning and thunder like bagpipes and tom-toms, and in two days the world is green. Let it be winter and there is a desolation of

Living, in South Africa

naked grandeur that shames a clothed prettiness. Let it be summer and there is a passing of growth. And at night there is a clear, living warmth, and stars more than any other world sees stand stark in the sky. All through the year the sun shines unhindered, defining the shapes and colours of things, giving space and distance, so that other continents seem, by comparison, vague and misty.

And then, underneath all this fierce brightness, also its darkness, the menace and mystery of the land, its hidden past and future. . . .

“Look,” says General Smuts, “how old Africa is, how strangely made, how unaltered. What is there in it that baffles us? Why can it not go forward in a straight line like other lands? Brilliant men come here to solve its problems and go away defeated. But that is why it holds us, 't has this terrible mystery.”

PART V

Politics in South Africa

CHAPTER 1

I

It was not, however, entirely of the poetical nature of the land General Smuts was thinking. "We who love South Africa as a whole," he wrote to Sir Henry de Villiers in 1907, "who have an ideal of her, who wish to substitute the idea of a United South Africa for the lost independence, who see in breadth of horizon, in a wider and more embracing statesmanship the cure for many of our ills and the only escape from the dreary pettiness and bickerings of the past—we are prepared to sacrifice much—not to Natal or the Cape, but to South Africa. . . . I hope that politicians will recognise that our strength does not lie in isolation but in union. In that way Union will come about not as a forced thing but as a ripe fruit fallen from the tree."

The question, however, in the minds of many, is whether secession from England will not also come about as a ripe fruit fallen from the tree.

2

In the year 1906, Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman, having been helped into power by his campaign against Chinese "slavery" in the Transvaal, granted Responsible Government to the conquered South African territories. Two years later, the National Conven-

The South Africans

tion, presided over by Sir Henry, afterwards BATHURST, de Villiers, met, and on the 31st of May, 1910, the Union of South Africa was formally established. That which had been dreamt of by Sir George Grey and Carnarvon and his emissary Froude, by President Burgers, by Hofmeyr and his Bondsmen, by Rhodes and his Raiders, was at last come to pass. There had, of course, been difficulties and compromises over questions of parliamentary representation, forms of government, the status of the Dutch language, the choice of a capital. W. P. Schreiner, as ever fathering the dark folk, was troubled about the native franchise. There had also been a doubt concerning the feeling of Natal, for Natal was anxious to keep its English tradition free from Dutch influence; but a referendum was taken, and resulted in a decision of three to one in favour of Union. As for the natives and coloured people, their position in each province remained what it had been before Union: they had the full franchise in the Cape, a merely illusory franchise in Natal, no votes in the Transvaal and Free State. Those of the Cape were incensed over the loss of their right (hitherto never exercised) to sit in Parliament. Women's suffrage was not granted. The Dutch language was put on an equality with the English. The capital was divided ("Without it," said General Smuts, "there will be no Union"), and Cape Town had the Legislature, and Pretoria the Administration. Now the Ministry travels backwards and forwards from Pretoria to Cape Town with what it calls its Zoo: its secretaries, its attendants, and its families. From January to July they are in Cape Town. In July or thereabouts they return to Pretoria.

The Union of South Africa, then, consists of four Provinces: the Cape of Good Hope, the Transvaal,

Politics in South Africa

the Orange Free State, and Natal. The native territories of Swaziland, Basutoland, and Bechuanaland are under Imperial administration. The mandate for what was once German South-West Africa has, since the War, been assigned to the Union. Rhodesia—despite General Smuts' passionate appeal a few years ago—refused and refuses to come in. It is still more afraid of the Dutch than was Natal, and will not even, like Natal, be tempted by railway advantages.

There is, in fact, a spirit in Rhodesia which infuriates the South African who believes that the white races here are growing towards one another, and into one another. It is a spirit which is significantly expressed in a book written not long ago by Mrs. Tawse Jollie, a woman member of the Rhodesian Parliament :

“The average Britisher has no conception,” she writes, “of the deep, smouldering longing for complete independence, for the wiping out of the last vestiges of subservience to an Empire whose very symbols are hateful, which burns in the heart of the Dutchman who may shake him by the hand and be his very good neighbour. . . . The hope that these two races may fuse is not being realised, and even the comradeship which was experienced in the Great War has not been instrumental in bridging the gulf. Broad-minded and educated men of both races may join hands, but what real union of hearts can there be so long as the Church and the education which it dominates are thrown into the scale, not in favour of equality of status for the two races, but to preserve and foster the most bigoted features of nationalism? It is a fight between the political, social, and religious ideals of the two races.”

This is, to a large extent, tub-thumping. It is not a question of the few broad-minded people who are

The South Africans

shaking hands, but of the few narrow-minded people—among the Dutch as well as the English—who are shaking fists. It seems, on the face of it, unnecessary to indicate to which of these parties the indignant lady belongs.

But she expresses very adequately the reason why Rhodesia stands outside the Union.

3

In the meantime, there is another little land very anxious to enter it.

Ninety miles from Delagoa Bay, cut off from the Indian Ocean by a strip of native country, wedged in between Zululand, Natal, the Transvaal, and Portuguese East Africa, there is the Crown Colony of Swaziland. It is about the size of Wales, and in the fertile coast belt of South Africa. Its earth is more suitable than any other in the country for the growing of cotton; it has so high a rainfall that the Queen of the Swazis is warmly acknowledged by the natives of even other tribes to be the holder of the secret of the rain; large rivers accept the homage of numberless lesser streams; it has sunshine, no frosts, health on the heights and malaria in the swamps. In the whole of it there are nearer two than three thousand Europeans, and to them two-thirds of the land is apportioned. To the hundred and ten thousand Bantus is allotted one-third, which is regarded as a very equitable arrangement. No Asiatics are allowed into the country. Its revenue, expenditure, and public debt would not stagger a respectable business man. They are each under a hundred thousand pounds.

And the white people (not the natives) in this idyllic little State wish to enter the Union. They are

Politics in South Africa

not content to be happy. They want also to be prosperous. And because Swaziland has no railways—not even the one mile that Basutoland boasts—and does not know how else to get them; and because there is no development without railways; now, therefore, unlike Rhodesia, Swaziland is anxious to join the Union.

4

And, indeed, to fall into the scheme of the South African Railways has its temptations. For the South African Railways (and with Railways go Ports, Harbours, and Lighthouses) are exactly what they call themselves: they belong to South Africa. They are a State enterprise. “The railways,” says the South Africa Act, “shall be administered on business principles, due regard being had to agricultural and industrial development within the Union, and promotion, by means of cheap transport, of the settlement of an agricultural and industrial population in the inland portions of all Provinces of the Union. So far as may be, the total earnings shall not be more than sufficient to meet the necessary outlays for working, maintenance, betterment, depreciation, and the payment of interest due on capital, not being capital contributed out of railway and harbour revenue.”

And, in fact, the South African Railways are notable as a national industry. Their mileage to the thousand square miles and to each European is greater than that of either Canada or Australia; their earnings are twenty-two million pounds a year; their longest journey exceeds two thousand miles; their latest record of accidents to passengers is about one in two millions.

The South Africans

Nevertheless it is still railways that South Africa most desperately needs. The land is big and its people scattered, and the coast-line keeps its firm, undeviating distance. As, half a century ago, the word railways was written on the heart of poor President Burgers, who borrowed ninety thousand pounds from Holland to buy railway plant and then had to mortgage the plant in Delagoa Bay to pay for its freight, so to-day it is written on the hearts of men who cannot dispose of their produce or educate their children because they live fifty miles from a station.

5

Considered from the point of view of the casual passenger, South African trains have a few defects and many merits. They are not (although the expresses at some points reach over fifty miles an hour) as fast or as smooth as the best English and Continental trains—and that is unavoidable on account of the narrow gauge which, in the interests of economy, was originally instituted and must now be continued. They are also not so luxurious. But in most other respects—in rates, convenience, and organisation—they compare more than favourably with the overseas systems.

The South African traveller is amazed at the casual way luggage is handled in England. It is mysterious to him how passengers and luggage are ever correctly linked up there. In South Africa the railway will, if he wishes, fetch or deposit his trunks; will give him a receipt for them when they go into the van, and will refuse to yield them again without that receipt.

The South African traveller is no less astounded at the charges that are made in Europe or America

Politics in South Africa

for sleeping accommodation, and at the insufficiency of that accommodation.

At home any train he gets into, excepting the local and suburban trains, is naturally arranged so that he may dress and sleep in his compartment; and for the payment of three shillings he will be provided with clean pillows, sheets, and blankets; his seat is, at night, transformed into a comfortable bunk; and, if he has to stay on the train several nights, no further charge is made. Coffee (unfortunately, very bad), tea, meals, drinks, fruit, sweets, cigarettes, and ice-cream are served in the compartments as well as in the saloons, and the food, as visitors to Wembley who took meals in the Union Railway coach should testify, is good and inexpensive.

There are, of course, excursion and season tickets, and special reductions; and, in addition, the railways organise, at certain periods in the year, sight-seeing tours through various parts of the country.

These tours make a holiday that must be among the best and cheapest in the world. One, for instance, which costs ten guineas, provides a nine-day trip through the northern and eastern parts of the Transvaal and on to Delagoa Bay. The charge covers not only the cost of the journey itself, beds, and food, but also the cost of picnics, motor-drives and a day and a half at the seaside. As the travellers go through the land, the villagers entertain them with dances and concerts. The stretches of country that are not interesting are traversed by night while the passengers sleep, and where the scenery ought to be remarked, the train halts.

There is a thing to see on this particular tour which is surpassed in South Africa only by the Victoria Falls. Here the Drakensberg Mountains—those same moun-

The South Africans

tains that the Voortrekkers crossed, and on the crest of which the Griquas died, have split themselves asunder—have moved apart as curtains on a stage—to make a revelation. There is a back-cloth of hills rising one upon another like waves, as if giant hands were shaking the earth beneath. The colours of the waves are the livid colours of sin and death, the clouds throw purple shadows across them, and overhead the sky is blue and white. . . .

Against this background there rises suddenly a pillar, an altar, a cenotaph, of grey stone, mountain tall. On a base hundreds of feet down, on a field of green which looks like grass, but is the tops of trees growing close together (and under the trees are boulders among little tumbling waters, and palms and ferns and lilies and red and yellow flowers), on this base, as the mountains were divided, there remained standing, like an admonition, a pillar of naked grey rock. Over the top of the pillar are flung offerings of green—sheaves and trailing branches. In a niche in the stone there grows a cactus with a single red flower.

The trees which are the base of the pillar—the cenotaph—climb up the mountain that guard it : they climb until the grey rock that crests the mountain forbids their further ascent. . . .

Behind, the hills are green and gentle, and the earth is black with fertility.

Not many miles away there is a little town called Pilgrim's Rest—one of the first gold-towns. . . .

At places such as these the travellers halt, or they are taken over citrus farms, or shown hippopotami in their own river, or led through the great game reserve where, on thousands of square miles of bush-veld, the wild animals of Africa roam as Nature decreed, and

Politics in South Africa

where may be seen lions, zebras, and numberless kinds of buck. . . .

And the train is the host, at the service and pleasure of its guests.

There are tours that go through what is called the garden route of the Cape Province and down to the sea and on it, and there are also tours in Natal. . . .

Such things are, one may assume, only the ornaments of the industrial structure, but they emphasise a national scheme for showing and opening up South Africa, and are, accordingly, of practical as well as of benevolent and æsthetic significance.

One of the chief portfolios in the Union Ministry is that of Railways and Harbours.

CHAPTER II

I

THIS is how the Union of South Africa is governed :—

The supreme executive authority in the Union is vested in the King and may be administered by him in person, or by the Governor-General as his representative. There is an Executive Council to advise the Governor-General. The members of this Executive Council are the Cabinet Ministers, who together with the Governor-General constitute the Governor-General-in-Council, and their selection conforms with the practice under the British Constitution.

South Africa has now had four Governors-General.

The first was Lord Gladstone, who was unpopular with some because he was the son of his father, and with others because his native sympathies were too strong, but who applied his conscientious, aloof spirit sincerely to the problems of South Africa.

The second was Lord Buxton, who developed more intimate relations with the people, did good work, and was well liked.

The third was Prince Arthur of Connaught, who was never anything but a seemingly-bored and uninspiring figure-head, and whose departure was welcomed by a nation anxious to be understood and honestly considered.

And the fourth is the Earl of Athlone, who, with

Politics in South Africa

his wife, established immediately a genial and sympathetic contact with South Africa and its interests.

2

Then there are two Houses of Parliament.

The Senate consists of eight representatives from each Province, and a further eight, nominated by the Governor-General-in-Council, of whom four are selected "mainly on the grounds of their thorough acquaintance with the wants and wishes of the coloured races in South Africa."

The Senators hold their seats for ten years. They are not a particularly conspicuous or representative body, and have little real power. They may, for instance, twice reject the Colour Bar Bill introduced by the National Party, yet that does not prevent it from ultimately becoming law when, in due course, the two Houses sit jointly and the Lower House outvotes the Upper.

The House of Assembly is composed of members directly elected by the voters of the Union. The Cape sends fifty-one members, the Transvaal fifty, Natal and the Free State each seventeen. There were originally ten Cabinet Ministers, but an eleventh has recently been added in order to increase the Labour representation in the Cabinet. Every House of Assembly, unless previously dissolved, has a duration of five years.

Except that there is in South Africa no hereditary ruling body, this Legislative Assembly stands in relation to the Senate as, in England, the Lower House stands to the Upper; and, equally, the real vitality of government is concentrated in it.

In addition to the Governor-General-in-Council

The South Africans

and the two Houses, each Province has an Administrator, appointed every five years by the Governor-General-in-Council, whose status is about equal to that of a Cabinet Minister. Each Province has, besides, a Council, consisting, in the Transvaal and Cape, of as many members as there are electoral divisions; and in the Free State and Natal of twenty-five members each. Of these Councillors, four form an Executive of which the Administrator is Chairman.

These Provincial Councils are subordinate legislatures to the Union Parliament, and have entrusted to them, among other things, considerable taxing powers.

South Africa is, finally, represented in England by a High Commissioner, and there are Trade Commissioners on the Continent and in East Africa and America.

3

The first Prime Minister of the Union was General Louis Botha. His second in command was General Smuts.

There were, even in those days, people who spoke of General Smuts as the brain, and of General Botha as the mouthpiece. But it was General Smuts himself who said that in Botha's "profound common-sense I see deeper statesmanship than in all the astuteness and cleverness of smaller men."

CHAPTER III

I

THE association of General Botha and General Smuts was a smooth and amicable affair. Nevertheless, there was an essential difference between the two men which went deeper than a mere matter of brains. It lay, fundamentally, in their separate reactions to human beings as individuals. To General Botha a man was a man in his own right ; and he accordingly succeeded in winning a warmth of personal attachment. But to General Smuts a man was—and is—only a part in a universal scheme. He is concerned with ideas rather than with people.

And this is why General Smuts, the greatest South African of his day, is a lonely man.

2

“ Slim Jannie ” the people call him ; and by that they mean many things—some not flattering. But the truth of the matter is that they do not, and cannot, understand him.

And how, indeed, should they ? How should a hot, struggling, perplexed populace understand an attitude towards life which leaps over its head into the mysterious future ? It is as if a man, flinging a lasso, could never train himself not to overthrow his mark. General Smuts, with his courage, his brilliance, his magnificent

The South Africans

vitality, his gay, smiling, eager, charming manner that is aristocratic enough not to realise the difference between one human soul and another—General Smuts cannot establish contact with his fellow-men. The reason is, possibly, as Mr. Shaw suggests in his Preface to *Saint Joan*, that “their fellows hate mental giants and would like to destroy them, not only enviously because the juxtaposition of a superior wounds their vanity, but quite humbly and honestly, because it frightens them”; but what the people say is that, although General Smuts may be physically approachable, although, after the War, he may have come back to the simplicity of his corrugated-iron house near Pretoria unspoilt by the veneration of all the world, he is still not spiritually accessible, and his very absence of human differentiations is merely one aspect of his arrogance.

And, intellectually, at least, General Smuts *is* arrogant. His mind is terribly swift, and it cannot bear the hampering association of slower minds. Nor has he the patience or the instinct to disguise his intolerance. He is like a mature person who too obviously reaches down to a child.

It is on this account that General Smuts is not, in practice, as in theory, the Complete Statesman. So far is he from being the Slim Jannie of conventional politics that he does not begin to delude his colleagues into believing that he greatly admires their ability, nor does he flatter them by letting them imagine that he leans heavily on their assistance. When General Smuts' party is in power, General Smuts is the government.

3

The fact is that General Smuts is a visionary; he cannot bear the little intermediate steps that join

Politics in South Africa

beginnings to ends ; and yet, at the same time, he has a temperament, an eagerness, an energy, a dynamic quality, which will not let him rest. The result is that in a world not composed of Smutses he hovers, a leader who has lost sight of his followers, solitarily over the ideal, and no one else gets anywhere.

It is really his absolute confidence in his goal which makes him sometimes reckless of his means of approach. Yet it is not the kind of cynical recklessness that led Rhodes to disaster. And then Rhodes must have despised his own soul. He could not believe in himself apart from his money. General Smuts relies, with an awful pride, on the creature his flesh houses. Although he loves power, he is as indifferent to wealth as he is to conventionality. As Prime Minister he had to live in the home under the mountains of Cape Town which Rhodes built for himself, and bequeathed to the future Premiers of South Africa. But he found a greater ease in the old military club-house near Pretoria, which he bought for three hundred pounds and converted into a home ; he was happy among his books, his cattle, and the grasses springing from his soil.

What General Smuts loves is not so much the people, as the things, of Africa : the stones, the leaves, the mountains and the nights. The people, they come and go, but Africa is eternal.

4

In this eternity, then, of Africa, he becomes impatient of the temporary wants and desires of the human material on its surface. A quarter of a century back he realised the inevitable consummation, and called up his philosophy to accept it. This Boer and

The South Africans

Briton business, he saw, had to end ; this handful of whites in South Africa had to fuse. Countrymen of his might despise him—as they despised also General Botha—for doing the quick and convenient thing, for ceasing so soon to grieve and resent, but South Africa's destiny was clear in his eyes ; and, as ever, he was prepared to leap the intervening spaces.

In a time, then, when the children of a century of Voortrekkers were nursing their pain, he was being briskly sensible and telling them to rise from their bed of suffering and come out and walk in the sunlight.

And although it is not to-day true, as Mrs. Tawse Jollie suggests, that the Boer shakes hands with his British neighbour feeling a secret enmity against him, it may easily have been true immediately after the Boer War that he did not love his conqueror. To-day the Boer is prepared to call any white man brother who will call himself, without reservation, South African. But that is the proviso he makes. The man may love England if he chooses, but he must love South Africa more ; he must think of it as his home and the home of his children, and really believe in its union.

But, not unnaturally, he did not feel this amity in the early nineteen-hundreds. And that very conciliation policy which endeared General Botha and General Smuts to the English estranged them from their own people. So there are Irishmen who call certain of their country-folk West Britons. . . . The Boer might know, in his heart, that, sooner or later, all white South Africa would be one nation, but there was still, he considered, such a thing as decorum. The widow must mourn a respectable period ; the funeral baked meats should not grace the wedding-feast. . . . It was this haste he considered indecent, and could not bear. . . .

Politics in South Africa

Rhodes, working for himself not less than for Britain, but working entirely for his own side, has received more veneration from his adherents than General Botha and General Smuts have ever done from theirs. These two, labouring for South Africa without thought of material gain—though, since they were human, they loved their power—have been great men in the eyes of the world, but because they took this short cut the inmost hearts of many of their own countrymen have been withheld from them. General Hertzog, arriving slowly and bitterly where General Smuts was many years ago, and maintaining now that there will be no secession until all South Africa wants it, is the real Boer leader. A man like General Hertzog, slow, careful, sincere, courageous, single-minded, and intellectually a little involved—such a man does not walk too far ahead of his nation, does not wander away out of sight. The steps by which he has advanced, from an aggressive hostility to Britain towards a realisation that South Africa cannot stand alone, have been so gradual that his followers' feelings have not been insulted. However, at one time, the talk may have been of secession and republics, the position now is that if one does not think too much about the unavoidable connection, life is not really so uncomfortable for a South African Nationalist.

General Hertzog, in short, has finally been forced into the same position in which General Botha and General Smuts landed at once with a jump. The man famous for his tact, and the other man famous for his slowness, belied their reputations, and failed on a question of taste. A certain sentiment was to be observed, and General Botha and General Smuts did not observe it. They asked that of the Boers which only Time had the right to demand. They called for

The South Africans

an eager admission where a resentful acceptance was the appropriate attitude.

Now General Botha, who, for his simpler humanity, had the love of his followers if not of his whole nation—for the Free State hated him—is dead, and General Smuts, alone, is in the pathetic position of having chiefly on his side, not those who fought with him a quarter of a century ago, but those who fought against him. On his front benches there sit with him men who were for Rhodes and against Kruger, who, after the Boer War, distrusted the spirit of South Africa so much that they sought to have the Constitution of the Cape Colony suspended—at least temporarily; and he is supported too by those mining-houses of whom he wrote, in 1906, “Our fear is that our party might be so small in the first Parliament as to be no real check on the mine-owners.”

To such a pass has he been pushed by Destiny.

CHAPTER IV

I

THIS is how it happens that General Smuts finds himself in his present ironical position.

Immediately before the Boer War there were the following divisions in what is now the Union of South Africa :—

Natal, practically all British, until recently a Crown Colony.

The Free State, wholly Dutch, a Boer Republic.

The Transvaal, a Boer Republic, with its centre, Johannesburg, as emphatically English as if a London much more populous than the rest of England put together were simply a French city.

The Cape Colony, divided, in politics, between Imperialism and a South African patriotism. . . .

For the time being, the Imperial Party called itself the Progressive Party. Essentially, however, it was Conservative. The South African patriotic party called itself the Bond.

The Bond was the combination of two societies. The first had been founded by a Dutch minister, the Rev. S. J. du Toit, for the promotion of a "United South Africa under one Flag." The second had also, fundamentally, a political meaning. Its founder was that J. H. Hofmeyr whom South Africa still remembers affectionately as Onze Jan—Our Jan; its name was

The South Africans

“The Farmers’ Defence Association,” and it stood for country against town.

The two societies were amalgamated in 1882.

And so much for the Rev. S. J. du Toit. The Bond was, henceforth, the instrument of Onze Jan. And whereas the clergyman had had as his ideal the furtherance of that local Dutch language which, only in 1925, following the advent of the Hertzog Government, was formally recognised as the joint official medium of the Union, and whereas that ideal was rooted in an intense racialism, it was the High Dutch of Holland Hofmeyr wanted; and, so far was he from his associate’s national urgency, that it was possible for him, until the Jameson Raid, to be the close friend of Rhodes and say: “If, in the course of time, we have a nationality of our own—then, and not before, shall we be ripe for independence. . . .”

So far had the Rev. S. J. du Toit’s aspirations been watered down.

It was probably his careful equilibrium that was at the root of Onze Jan’s extraordinary power.

The influence of the Bond spread to the Free State and the Transvaal, although, very soon, its activities were chiefly directed to the Cape. Onze Jan himself, refusing, except once, for a short period, to take office—he was called, for his subterranean methods, the Mole—was, nevertheless, for thirty years the autocrat of his party. The Bondsmen voted as Hofmeyr ordered them to vote. When a Cabinet was to be formed, Hofmeyr signified which members would be acceptable to him. All kinds of politicians courted his friendship. He was loyal to Britain, and, at the same time, the champion of South African interests. He was against Kruger’s Republicanism, and also against Milner’s Imperialism. He was at the head of a Boer organisation,

Politics in South Africa

and yet favoured a liberal native policy. He was opposed to Union, but died in England while assisting at its formation.

It was against the Bond of Hofmeyr, against those it supported, men like Schreiner and Merriman, that the Progressives of Rhodes and Jameson were pitted.

2

Then came the Boer War. When that was dying towards peace, Rhodes, now at the head of the Progressive Party, embarked with forty-one of his followers on a campaign of distrust, and advocated the suspension of the Cape Constitution, the temporary suppression of its Parliament.

The move—supported, of course, by Natal, and also by New Zealand, but vehemently opposed by Canada and Australia and, naturally, the Cape—was not only unsuccessful, it was also, as far as the Progressive Party itself was concerned, catastrophic. It aroused an hostility against the Progressives, even among its own moderate members, from the effect of which the party never recovered.

Four years later, Dr. Jameson having, in the meantime, been made Prime Minister at the Cape, Campbell Bannerman substituted the maximum of trust for Chamberlain's maximum of distrust. The Boer colonies were granted Responsible Government.

At the elections which followed, General Botha, with his newly formed Het Volk Party, took office in the Transvaal, and General Smuts was his Colonial Secretary. In the Free State the Oranje Unie of ex-President Steyn and General Hertzog secured twenty-nine out of thirty-eight seats. In the Cape Mr. Merriman led the recently established South

The South Africans

African Party, embodying the Bond, to triumph. In all the Provinces, that is, except Natal, which had no important Dutch element, the National parties were victorious. The Progressives, although they now chose to call themselves Unionists, never again sat on the Government benches.

They were, however, when Union came, the official Opposition in the Cape House; and when Botha, as first Union Premier, ultimately combined all these national parties under the title of the South African Party, refusing to consider the Unionists' suggestion of a Best-Man Government, they remained the Opposition in the Union Parliament, with a group of nominally Independent Natal members sympathetic towards Botha, with Labour represented insignificantly by four Rand members.

3

But, in 1912, General Hertzog, one of the Free State Ministers in Botha's Cabinet, began to feel uncomfortable in an atmosphere of too great Dutch and British amity. He did not like the Botha-Smuts conciliation policy, the eager consideration of Imperial interests. He thought there was too much turning of the other cheek, too much talk of Dutch and British flowing together in one broad stream, instead of in two decently separated channels. He believed the Dutch language was not being fairly treated.

It was, as might have been expected, Natal that soonest became impatient with General Hertzog. A Natal member of the Ministry resigned in protest against this "anti-British and anti-Imperial" attitude. General Botha suggested that General Hertzog should do the same. General Hertzog, however, whose chief

Politics in South Africa

spiritual characteristic is a dour tenacity, refused ; and General Botha accordingly tendered his own resignation, but was immediately asked by the Governor-General, Lord Gladstone, to form a new Ministry.

He did so without the respective champions of Dutch Patriotism and British Imperialism.

General Hertzog was now an exile from that party which had been born, in three Provinces, of Dutch sentiment : he was thrown out of the home built by the Bond, the Oranje Unie and Het Volk : he was estranged from the South African Party. But he did not go alone. The Free State rallied to him, he found sympathisers in the Transvaal, in the Cape, and also in those two districts which, after the Boer War, had been transferred from the Transvaal to Natal.

And thus came into being the National Party. . . .

Now things began to move downward for the South African Party. General Smuts did something to agitate the English members. General Botha was forced into alienating Dutch members.

With General Smuts it was a matter of that impatient, restless temperament of his that demands, at all costs, the making of an end of things. There had been, in 1913, a miners' strike on the Rand which had gone as far as incendiarism, and had finally been quelled by the use of Imperial troops, by shooting and by death. Six months later the men on the State-owned Railways struck, the Federation of Trades supported them, and a general strike was declared.

And this hampering unrest was more than General Smuts could contemplate with calmness. He was Minister of Defence. He made a gesture which said : " We are going to put a stop to this." Martial law was proclaimed ; the recently organised Defence Force and Burgher Commandos were called out ; the strike

The South Africans

was ended; and nine Labour leaders were deported, without trial, to England.

That last shocked South Africa and it shocked England, and it gave Labour a moral weapon which it has never ceased to use against General Smuts.

At the Transvaal Provincial Council elections that followed, Labour, which had begun so insignificantly in South Africa, gained a majority.

4

The next thing that happened to the South African Party was that General Botha not only supported England in the Great War, but went out personally to oppose the Boer rising that followed in South Africa. What had the Government expected of the rebels? What had the rebels expected of the Government? It was twelve years after the Boer War. There were Boers who felt that their honour demanded this seizing of an opportunity to attack England. No less, on the other hand, did General Botha feel that his honour demanded the keeping of the confidence England had shown in his integrity.

The result, however, was a further weakening of the South African Party, a weakening which was increased, rather than diminished, by the incursion of a new type of supporter—the capitalist; and by the titles that now began to glisten on Government benches.

And, on top of it, the natives, threatened with segregation, the Indians, reduced in status, and hampered as immigrants, were also discontented.

Within a few years the South African Party, which had so triumphantly marched into office after Union, had offended Britons, Boers, natives, Indians, and democrats in South Africa.

Politics in South Africa

5

And now the S.A.P. was no longer the patriotic party. The National Party of General Hertzog was that. The National Party stood to the South African Party as the South African Party had itself once stood to the Unionists, and as the Sinn Feiners used to stand to the Nationalists in Ireland. And so emphatically was the Party of Botha and Smuts no longer the thing it used to be, that the situation in the House of Assembly was now not S.A.P. against Unionists, but S.A.P. against Nationalists, with a dwindling band of Unionists gallantly defending property rights, with an increasing band of Labour pertinaciously assailing those rights.

The South African Party, in short, when it came to look the situation in the face, found that, really, in these days there was nothing to distinguish it from its old enemy. At the next election it joined forces with the Unionists. The descendants of the Bond and the descendants of the Progressives, like the children of the Montagus and Capulets, were united. General Smuts, Prime Minister since the death of General Botha, sat together with the men against whom, twenty years before, he had fought; he had for his associates the friends of the mining-houses whose activities he had once feared and hoped to curtail; he was deserted by the bulk of his own countrymen.

CHAPTER V

I

THE National Party took its stand against the new combination.

There was an after-war depression in South Africa. There was the Rand Revolt of 1922, with, again, an end in bloodshed. There was an administration of the Immigration Act which operated against the Jews of Eastern Europe. There was a growing racial consciousness among natives. They had been in France with the troops. They were learning things. . . . There was a succession of bad farming years, a devastation of crops by unprecedented visitations of locusts.

Whom was one to blame for all these things if not the Government? Bye-election after bye-election went against the South African Party, and in favour of Nationalists or Labour. General Smuts' majority sank down and further down. He could not bear the tension. His temperamental impatience sprang out again. He would know what all this unpopularity really amounted to. He had given the talents and energies acclaimed by all the world to the service of this tucked-away oddment of humanity in South Africa. Did it truly not appreciate him? 'Then let it say so in chorus.

One day, following a bye-election fought almost in the nature of a test-case and lost, he told the House, and thus, for the first time, his supporters, that he

Politics in South Africa

could no longer carry on government in this uncertainty. The visit of the Prince of Wales must be postponed. They were going to the country.

A year before it was due a general election was fought in South Africa.

There must have been something in the air. . . . All kinds of people suddenly became Nationalist.

And, what was worse, a combination more striking than even that of South African Party and Unionist had been arranged. The Nationalists had invited Labour to join them against General Smuts.

2

They won the election overwhelmingly. After a struggle of twelve years General Hertzog led the Government.

A Ministry was formed which comprised eight Nationalists and two Labour men. Among the Nationalists there was not a single Briton, among the Labour there was not a single Boer. The Nationalists were, by heredity, Tory. They were land-owners. They were countrymen. They were employers and not employees. They were traditionally opposed to Socialism. They stood for exactly the contrary of the Labour ideal. Only on two points had the new partners any fundamental agreement. They both wanted a White South Africa—at all costs, and they both hated General Smuts.

On each side of the House there sat now a combination of Briton and Boer.

The South Africans

3

There are people in South Africa who say it cannot last. They say the position is too unnatural. What is General Smuts doing among the mine-owners? What is General Hertzog doing among the miners? How are British separated, and Dutch separated? How are Conservatives joined with Socialists, and countrymen with townsmen? And General Hertzog—since he is in Government, why is he not as belligerent as he used to be? What is he there for if he does not intend to be belligerent?

It is all very well, they say, to talk of responsibility and caution. Is General Hertzog becoming as conciliatory as General Botha once was? What is he going to do, actually and not theoretically, about segregating the natives? Is Labour using Nationalist, or Nationalist Labour? How will the parties ultimately be reshuffled? Will there be split off again from the patriotic party a more urgent patriotic party?

To-day, of course, the Lord is with the Nationalists. Not in thirty years did there fall as much rain as in the Summer of 1925 drenched South Africa. Their first campaign against the locusts was successful, and whether the Government really did it, or the rains, does not matter. Platinum was found—is being found—in the most extraordinary places, and money came pouring into the country.

Indeed the hand of Providence is clearly in evidence as far as platinum is concerned. Who, until the Nationalists came in, would have thought it possible that, whatever the assayers might report, practically every farm in the Transvaal was a platinum field?

Politics in South Africa

And then the visit of the Prince of Wales. It gave an impetus to trade. It made things seem very jolly in the land. He did not smile so consistently as was expected, but, on the other hand, he danced more than seemed humanly possible. In the country the old 'Taakhaars—the old rough-haired fellows—went out to meet him, sitting slackly on their horses, in those same commandos in which they opposed the British troops, and they put on their Sunday clothes to have dinner with him, and spoke of him as "Onze Prins." The Dutch girls, who are nominally venomous politicians, liked his youth, and gave him tea, and smiled at him, and danced with him. Students of Nationalist habit and negrophobe convictions blackened their faces and pranced about like Zulus; and the Zulus themselves, and the other Kaffirs, in their tens of thousands, danced war-dances that would have inspired Diaghileff, and then doffed their plumes and leopard skins and horse-tails, and went home to resume the offal clothes of European civilisation, or the dirty old blankets, that they customarily wear. . . .

It is very probable that, if General Smuts had not been impatient and had allowed the election to take place, in due time, after the Prince's visit and after the rains, an exuberant South Africa would have maintained him in power. On the other hand, there is no doubt that, for the country at large, it was the most fortunate thing that could have happened that the Prince came when it fell to the Nationalists to welcome him. The Boers' most striking virtue is their hospitality. They are, by habit and circumstance and tradition, patriarchal hosts. Apart even from the amiable feeling that is grounded in success—and there are Boers who are finding it extremely hard not to feel more warmly towards England than they used to do—

The South Africans

Nationalists throughout the land felt a sense of responsibility towards the heir to the throne of England because he came to South Africa while their party was in office.

It is possible that talk of secession may, given the impetus, be revived; General Hertzog, who once thought Botha too Imperialist, may, in time, be found to be too Imperialist himself. But those Boers who have made contact with the future King of England, have made contact also with England; and although they are now, on reaction, a little shy and embarrassed at having been involved in all this cordiality, some recollection of it may, without their even being conscious of it, remain.

PART VI

The People in South Africa To-Day

A.

THE BOERS
THE ENGLISH
THE JEWS
THE ASIATICS
THE HALF-CASTES

CHAPTER I

I

YOUTH, as everyone admits, is rebellious. It is not as original as it thinks itself, nor as inspired; for it slavishly follows the current fashion, and that which ends as principle begins, very often, as pose. Nevertheless, its attitude is clearly defined. However readily it may wear its brother's plus fours, its father's baggy trousers it will vehemently reject. If it must parade in borrowed garments, let them, at least, be of contemporary pattern.

And so, in Europe, the young men of questing imagination become Socialists. But in South Africa they cannot do that so readily. It is extremely difficult for a reasonable man to be a Socialist in South Africa. He is faced immediately with a situation which neither precedent nor imagination can overcome. He is brought up against the problem of the Kaffir.

One might, of course, call oneself a limited Socialist. One might say: "Excluding the black people, I am a Socialist." Indeed, that is what South African Socialists—with a few exceptions who are generally regarded as lunatics or Bolsheviks—do, in effect say: "We want every man to have a chance in life." . . . "And the Kaffir?" . . . "Well, no, not the Kaffir. He isn't fit to participate in the millennium."

The Socialist—the Labour man—is in a curious position in South Africa. If he styles himself a

The South Africans

Socialist, he must qualify his attitude to the extent of excluding from his humanity those millions who most desperately need it. If he styles himself a Labour man, he must specifically act against the interests of the very people who, no less to-day than in Trollope's time, are the real workers in the land.

The Kaffirs do nearly all the unskilled labour in South Africa. The latest legislation seeks to exclude them from competition with the whites. But in the mines they, and not the miners, work on the stopes. On the farms they, and not the farmers, do the planting and reaping and herding. They pass the bricklayer his bricks, and the plumber his pipes. They dig the trenches and lay the roads. They collect the refuse and deliver the milk, the papers, the coal, the groceries, the meat. They go about on bicycles with slips of paper they cannot read, searching for addresses to which nobody seems to be able to direct them. Long before daylight they are at the housework. It is an utter shock to a South African when, on a ship going to England, he comes, for the first time, upon a white man wiping the floors of cabins. Nor can he bear to see a white woman washing an English doorstep. In South Africa one does not see white men or white women working like that. A European has to be very poor indeed not to keep a Kaffir. . . .

Yet when the Socialist and the Labour man speak of "a chance in life for every man," they do not mean the Kaffir.

And, indeed, if they meant the Kaffir, where would they themselves be?

And that is their bewildering position.

The People in South Africa To-Day

2

It is, then, not towards Socialism that the young South African tends. Even the backveld Boer who has now replaced the Cornishman on the mines—and if he were not on the mines he would, very often, have little chance of escape from becoming a poor white—even he is not, fundamentally, a supporter of Labour or Socialism. It has been mentioned already that in the Labour Party in the Legislative Assembly there is not a Dutch name, as there is not, in the National Party there, an English name. In Johannesburg the Dutch mine-worker will go on strike when he is told to do so, and he will vote Labour if his alternative is the South African Party; but in Johannesburg, as elsewhere, the South African of Dutch descent, with the spirit of youthful revolt in him, and particularly the South African repudiating the Europe of the Great War, is a Nationalist.

3

It is curious to note how the political—or the patriotic—fashion has changed.

The Dutchman, before the Boer War, was not particularly proud of his nationality. He hated the Englishman, but he also stood in awe of him. And in the Cape Colony a man with social aspirations and a Dutch name was inclined to pronounce it in as English a way as possible, and he pointed out that, at least, he was of Huguenot and not of Hollander descent.

Nor was he encouraged to self-respect by his English neighbour. As the Dutchman feared the Englishman, so the Englishman scorned the Dutchman. Boer

The South Africans

stood to him merely for boor. And the same thing happened to the Dutchman as happens to the Jew. He was made to feel unhappily conscious of his nationality. And he could escape the discomfort of it only in two ways: either by shunning his despiser, or by shunning that in himself which was being despised.

In those days the young aspiring Dutchman expressed his rebelliousness very often in a repudiation of the Dutch tradition.

But then came the Boer War, and blood proved stronger than ambition. There were still to be found people of Dutch ancestry adhering to the English side of things, but they belonged mostly to Cape Town and its environs, where often a Dutch name has, in these times, little more national meaning than it might have in New York among the descendants of the Knickerbockers. In the Transvaal and Free State, however, there were boys of fifteen swept into battle and a sense of race. Those boys of fifteen are to-day men in the force of their lives, nor has Time yet gathered into the past their elder brothers and even their fathers.

The war ended. The Dutchman who had both hated and admired the Englishman now only hated him. The Englishman, uneasily conscious of having lost something which, however little he may have appreciated it, was still a spiritual possession, was humanly anxious to be considered once more a fine fellow. As the Dutchman now stepped back, he stepped forward.

4

A few years later came the magnificent move on England's part of the offer to the Boer Republics of Responsible Government. Union followed. England

The People in South Africa To-Day

having done something noble, glowed in the warm bliss that accompanies magnanimity. It contemplated the Boers with that sentimental air which we bend on our beneficiaries. General Botha and General Smuts became heroes in England. A football team, composed very largely of young Dutchmen—and all South African football teams are composed very largely of young Dutchmen—went across to England, and excited further tenderness towards their countrymen. They flung Dutch words to one another across the football fields of Britain with the self-confidence that is born of conscious popularity. In South Africa young Englishmen in the schools and colleges began to make a point of using an occasional Dutch idiom—apart from the fact that it was now officially and commercially desirable to be bilingual. The Englishman, in short, except when he absent-mindedly or instinctively reverted to his nineteenth-century attitude towards the Dutchman, was prepared to be friends.

The Dutchman, however, his pride awakened by this totally unexpected swing upwards, was not only cautious, he was also a little arrogant. The World War found him divided between an inclination to respond to this new spirit of English brotherliness and a suspicion of it. He expressed his uncertainty by fighting with England in France, and by making a final flicker of independence in South Africa. Now the young Dutchman no longer admired the Englishman as twenty years ago. He did not, in general, feel himself to be the Englishman's inferior. He met him without awe—as an equal.

When General Hertzog formed his National Party, young Free State, without qualification, supported him. It was joined, in due course, by victims of the reaction and depression that followed the end of the

The South Africans

War. General Smuts' party was swept aside with other institutions of the unprofitable past. Young Dutchmen on the Rand, who were not Labour, became Nationalist. In the Universities (excepting, always, the colleges in the Eastern Province and Natal) there was a spirit of Afrikanerdom abroad. Undergraduates began to speak with enthusiasm of the flexibility, the rapid growth, the sonority, the literary adequacy of that South African Dutch which has overridden High Dutch and is called Afrikaans. On tables in country sitting-rooms one began to see volumes of verse written in this folk-language, and spoken of in terms of uncritical appreciation. . . .

The Dutchman of these days is no longer shy of his nationality. And, for that reason, however he may assert his Afrikanerdom, he feels less sullen towards his English neighbour than ever he has done. With pride has come also serenity. With success a friendliness of which he is barely conscious himself.

Now he seems to feel like a host in his own home, ready to extend the hand of welcome.

CHAPTER II

I

WHAT sort of person is the South African of Dutch descent whom one loosely and inappropriately speaks of as a Dutchman, but who prefers to define himself as an Afrikaner? Does he resemble the Hollander who came with van Riebeeck in 1652? Does the Voortrekker of a century ago still live vividly in him? Has he changed since a United South Africa became a part of the British Empire?

It may be said at once that, just as the Hollander has been moulded by the physical characteristics of his country, so, with a difference, has the Afrikaner (but let him, for the ease of custom, still be called Dutchman or Boer—the word Boer means simply farmer).

In Holland there are nearly seven million people living in an area which might comfortably spread itself on rather less than five per cent. of the ground in only one of the Union Provinces. In Holland there are between five and six hundred people to the square mile. In Holland the highest mountain is little more than a thousand feet above sea-level, and a quarter of the land is below sea-level. In Holland one may go from one end of the country to the other on water, and water is the powerful, insidious enemy that has to be held at bay for very life's sake.

The Union of South Africa—and the boundaries of the Union hinder no trekker—is nearly four hundred

The South Africans

and seventy-four thousand miles in extent, and it accommodates about three white people to the square mile. Huge mountain ranges traverse it. Its physical problems are the conquest of space and drought. Where the Hollander, jostling against hundreds of other Hollanders on his little square mile, works and works and works for life, and tries to push the sea away, the South African Dutchman, discovering two other white beings settled within a mile of him, thinks how crowded the country is getting, and worries about his water-rights.

He has as much space and air and sunshine as a man can use ; he has at hand a race of dark people made, it seems to him, by God, to save him the hardest physical effort, and he stretches his limbs, and moves at his leisure, and waits for the seasons to wind themselves off the reel of time.

The light and warmth have made him big in bone and muscle. The unrestrained spaces have developed in him a passion for freedom. The loneliness has made him unquestioningly hospitable. The companionship of Nature has awakened in him a vague poetry which manifests itself in a love of the desolate earth, indeed of desolation itself. And, if the Hollander has developed an obstinate strength by his constant struggle against water and a crowding humanity, the Boer has developed an obstinate strength by his constant struggle against drought and by his solitude.

The virtues, however, which his circumstances have engendered in him are counterbalanced by defects. To his isolation he owes not only his love of liberty, but also his narrowness of outlook ; not only his sense of hospitality, but also a certain evasive suspiciousness. If to be placed beyond the reaches of comparison gives a man a dignified serenity, it deprives him, very often, of an intellectual grace. Observing around him neither

The People in South Africa To-Day

superiors nor inferiors, the Boer has the outlook of an aristocrat, but, on the other hand, he has, too, a limited idea of his own position in the world.

One might continue at length to show how the conditions of his life have inevitably moulded the character of the Boer, and yet one could never be accurate, for conditions and their influence are not constant, and, like the people of other nationalities, Boers vary.

There are, for instance, those who are called backvelders. They have been described as if they were a peculiar growth, but, in fact, a backvelder is simply a person living out of the range of urban civilisation. There are backvelders all over Europe. The South African backvelder is not very different from the English backvelder Mr. Bernard Gilbert discusses, and he is—except in his lowest depths—ininitely superior to the villagers of Mr. T. F. Powys and Mr. Caradoc Evans, as he is also superior to the countrymen described by Continental realistic novelists. One may meet, in casual travel on the Continent, people much meaner in intelligence and outlook than any Cape coloured person; and South Africans who, during the War, shared German prison-life with Russians, speak of them as being more degraded than the ordinary Kafir, and would certainly never dream of comparing the average French or German or Belgian soldier with the average Boer soldier.

That the backvelder may, under certain conditions, be a person deficient in morals or manners is, nevertheless, true enough. If he lives on the veld, out of reach of trains, out of contact with education and decent opinion; if he knows nothing, hears nothing, is told nothing, obviously he will be under-civilised.

The Kafir in his kraal has the tradition of his clan, and the surveillance of his chief. But the backvelder

The South Africans

who has merely Nature to instruct him has a poor guide to those qualities which arouse our trained admiration. None of those virtues we extol—not esprit de corps, nor self-sacrifice, nor honesty, nor chivalry, nor generosity, nor sympathy, nor self-restraint—are instincts. Instincts are those gross characteristics we spend our lives in trying to overcome. . . .

In one respect, however, the South African backvelder is different from any other kind of backvelder. He is never the lowest in the land. So far is he from the subservience of the European countryman, that, on the contrary, he is always someone's "baas." Whatever he may be, the white man—any kind of white man, merely because he is white—is "baas," is master, to the Kaffir. One's black servant will speak of the baas who is begging at the door, of the baas who stole the broom. He will assuage the beggar, he will apprehend the thief, and address each, in doing so, as "Baas."

To four-fifths of the humanity in South Africa, then, every backvelder is an aristocrat. But just this aristocracy in his ruin.

2

We have, in South Africa, a class of person called a "poor white." There is a corresponding class in America, and its origin is the same.

A poor white is someone of European extraction who cannot support himself according to a European standard of civilisation, who cannot keep clear the line of demarcation between black and white.

One-tenth of the whole white population of the Union are poor whites.

The People in South Africa To-Day

3

This is, very often, the genesis of the poor white :—

In the old days a man could have practically all the land he wanted for the asking. There was enough of it, and it belonged to nobody in particular. So, as he went trekking along, he settled himself comfortably on a piece of land not always quite as large as an English county, and that land was his farm. He built on it a house of unburnt brick with a roof of thatch or corrugated iron, he fenced in a yard, he dug a well, he planted as much as he could manage, and he turned his cattle out to graze. When the European visitor, even to-day, is shown a South African farm, he is surprised to see often merely miles of untouched veld. . . .

Well, that trekker became a patriarch. He had a large family, and most of his children remained with him at the homestead. When he died the land was parcelled out among them, for there is no system of primogeniture in South African law. According to the common law of the country, there is community of property between husband and wife. In practice, a mutual will is made which leaves the survivor in possession and enjoyment of the property. On the death of the survivor it is equally divided among the children. . . .

On these subdivided portions the children, in turn, begat large families. And, again, death and inheritance broke up the estate.

By this time the man who had not fitted himself to be a town-dweller, or who had not learnt more scientific methods of agriculture, could not make a living on his strip of ground. And still, owing to the presence and cheapness of the Kaffir, he had never

The South Africans

acquired the habit of labour. Now he could no longer afford to be an employer, nor was he trained to be a worker. Occasionally he compromised by settling on someone else's land and acting as a kind of superintendent there in return for the privilege of using the farm also for his own purposes, his own interest in any ground having, of course, long ago slipped away from him. He was then called a *bijzoner*. But, most frequently, he drifted towards the towns in the hope of finding employment there.

To some extent he did so. The Rand mines are to-day full of Dutchmen who have replaced the original Cornish miners. But the mines cannot absorb all the unskilled white men who need situations. The erstwhile backvelder sinks to living in a room in a yard among natives and Asiatics, without money, without a trade, unable to command a white man's wage, unable to live on a black man's wage, unemployed and unemployable. Living so, the distinction between coloured and white cannot be maintained. The descendant of the aristocratic land-owner has, in short, become a poor white.

4

But it is not always the backvelder who ends as a poor white. Englishmen, without money or training or capacity, who have come to South Africa because they cannot support themselves in England, and have vague, romantic ideas about the "colonies," find themselves in South Africa in a worse predicament than at home. For in England there are primitive jobs that an unskilled labourer can do. He can lift and dig and fetch and carry. In South Africa a white man does not lift or dig or fetch or carry. A Kaffir

The People in South Africa To-Day

does such things for a shilling or two shillings a day. Apart from the fact that a white man can no more in South Africa than in England live on three pounds a month, no one would dare to offer him so little; and, apart even from this difficulty, a white man cannot be seen working beside a black man.

And so this kind of immigrant, like the backvelder, sinks into the slums, which are more degrading in Africa than in England on account of the colour complication, and he too becomes a poor white—a seeker after relief work or charity or unskilled opportunity—a man who lowers the white man's banner of pride.

5

Or if the poor white is not in the towns, he is wandering helplessly about the country or he is concentrated on the alluvial diamond diggings. There are diggings older than Kimberley and nearly twice as old as Johannesburg, and there are diggings proclaimed only a few years ago, a few months ago, yesterday. And thither, as has already been mentioned, the poor whites of the country flock, and are joined by men who have lost their jobs, or who have grown tired of a small certainty, or who cannot bear the restrictions of employment; and, very often, these men, too, refusing to abandon a hope which wakes afresh every morning, become poor whites.

6

And, finally, of course, poor whites are, in these days, born into their degraded inheritance.

CHAPTER III

I

AMONG the backvelders, then, are those who have been overwhelmed by the spaces of Africa, and enervated by its peculiar labour conditions.

But there are others who have conquered themselves and the land, and who are really in the position of European landed proprietors. They are in touch with the railway or they own motor-cars. They follow modern developments. Their children go to school and, subsequently, to college. Their sons take agricultural courses and bring home the latest farming methods.

The South African Dutchman has the Scot's reverence for learning, and a similar type of brain. He is solid and thorough and logical rather than agile and brilliant, but he has also a quaint untranslatable humour. He shares with the Jew high places on the examination lists.

His patient, exhaustive brain fits him peculiarly for the law—in this case, the Roman-Dutch Law, inherited from Holland, where, since Napoleon's time, it is no longer practised—and the legal system and tradition in South Africa are as highly developed as any in the world. He occupies many professorial chairs. He has ability as a doctor or engineer. He becomes, almost too readily, a teacher or Civil servant. He is, by disposition and habit, a politician. And the Dutch

The People in South Africa To-Day

Reformed pulpits of South Africa are, almost exclusively, the rostrums of men trained in local colleges and seminaries. Where the clergy of other churches are, almost without exception, imported from overseas, so that they can never entirely adapt themselves to the peculiar needs of the country, the Dutch *predikants*, born of the soil, have a tremendous influence—not only spiritually, but also socially and politically—on their following.

For business, however, the Boer seems to have little talent. Although he had the earliest opportunities, his name does not head the big financial groups, nor does it decorate the signboards of important warehouses and factories.

And he has not, in his nearly three hundred years' occupation of South Africa, made a significant contribution to the arts or sciences. Yet, with educational facilities, these things will come. One meets to-day Dutchmen with what is called the artistic temperament: at least, they have an appreciation of music, books, and painting; are lazy, impractical, enthusiastic, and interesting, and bend towards advancing ideas.

2

This young Dutchman—lawyer, doctor, Civil servant—is barely to be distinguished from the young English South African, or, indeed, from the Englishman himself. He is bigger and heavier, perhaps, both in body and feature, but he looks more like an Englishman than like any other European, even the Hollander or Frenchman of his ancestry. And he is, resembling the Englishman here too, a notable sportsman. His handling of a gun is traditional; the eye which has been trained for shooting has made him good also at

The South Africans

ball games; and eye and weight combined explain, perhaps, his capacity for football. When he attends a British university he readily finds a place in its Rugby teams; and, particularly at Guy's Hospital, the names of the representative footballers are amusing for a South African to contemplate.

For the rest, a Dutchman will travel fifty miles for a dance, he becomes soon conscious of sex, and he marries with alacrity.

3

But in two respects, a Dutchman, until quite recently, differed from an Englishman. He had, on the one hand, few social inhibitions; he had, on the other hand, little idealism towards what are called the subject races. Any man, as long as he was white, was his equal; any man, if he was yellow or brown or black, was his inferior. Until the end of the nineteenth century, no casual white traveller on the veld needed to hesitate at the entrance of a Boer's homestead. He was welcome to enter and join the family. The members of that family would, one after another, trail past him, slipping into his clasp a characteristically limp and unresponsive hand. He might eat there and sleep there, and find accommodation too for his horse, his conveyance, and his Kaffir. And there would be no self-consciousness in his reception, no agitated striving to impress, no embarrassment over any inadequacy.

The same spirit that characterised the Boer on his homestead followed him to the town. He met the important person without diffidence and the inconsequent person without pride. His manner, and especially towards elderly folk, was easy and courteous.

The People in South Africa To-Day

But a fuller civilisation is just beginning now to deprive him of something of this large simplicity. The departure of the patriarchal system has rather dimmed his reverence for his elders. A larger contact with his fellows has made necessary a certain limit to that hospitality which, when calls on it were not so frequent, could be exercised without restraint. Ideas of form and style and status are entering his head. He is no longer so ready to extend his slack hand and cordial welcome to any white stranger, saying confidently and confidingly, as if he were doing the honours of the world to a visitor from another planet: "Ik is Pienaar": "I am Pienaar"—or Marais or van Aardt or whatever his name might be. He is learning from his English neighbour to require an introduction.

4

On the other hand, he has taught his English neighbour something of his own spirit towards his dark-skinned neighbour. To-day, almost as an instinct of nature, the white South African is hostile to the black. Children of English parentage born in the Free State and Transvaal are not less negrophobe than children of Dutch parentage. In the Cape, of course, there is a tradition—but it is frequently exercised more in action than in heart—of a humane, and, at least, a politically equal, treatment of the black or coloured person. But, in general, the sentiment the South African has about colour—whether consciously or unconsciously—is that which once spurred the exodus of the Voortrekkers: God made the black man different from the white man, and it was against nature to deny that difference. The modern Boer may not, like his ancestor, find his justification in the

The South Africans

Bible : "Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be to his brethren," but he cannot help feeling that the Kaffir hardly belongs to the same order of creation as the white man. So that, in one way, he goes further than the Bible, for he does not admit the application of the word "brethren." And yet, again, his colour-feeling has something almost religious about it. He considers it to be his *duty* to hate black blood in all its manifestations.

The root of this hostility is probably to-day grounded in fear of miscegenation, for no other kind of physical fear can now be awakened by the native ; but the result is that the Boer frequently treats the native with the utmost callousness, and it is recognised that a country jury—that is, generally speaking, a Boer jury—will not readily convict a white man charged with a crime against a black man.

But, again, the recently arrived Englishman or other European often sheds, in Africa, the ideal of fair treatment which holds in the country he came from. Quite soon he catches the prevailing infection of racial arrogance ; and, at the same time, his conduct is not qualified by either experience or understanding. Thus it happens that, in practice, if not in national spirit, the Boer often treats the native better than does the Englishman. And, apart even from this matter of understanding, the Boer has the advantage in his behaviour towards an inferior that he has no class consciousness. He will (without prejudice) chat with his Kaffir servant, will take a personal interest in him in a way an Englishman, trained to a more conventional relationship between master and servant, or perhaps not accustomed to that relationship at all, cannot bring himself to do.

Even when the Englishman is strong enough to

The People in South Africa To-Day

maintain his national tradition of justice, the difference remains that which once existed between the Northern and Southern United States. The Northerners fought for the rights and privileges of the Negroes, but the Southerners had an affectionate intimacy with their darkies which was not customary among their more highly principled countrymen.

Such amiability, however, springs from the same source as its complementary harshness: the connection between owner and chattel.

The farmer who converses agreeably with his Kaffir (one naturally says "his" Kaffir in South Africa—as if the Kaffir were the white man's property) as they jog along over the veld, resents bitterly the allocation in his neighbourhood of land for native settlement, and presses in Parliament, as does also the English farmer, for greater severity in the master and servant laws. He cares for the Kaffir, not as a man, but as a servant. . . .

And yet the Boer's attitude towards the native is benignity itself compared with the Belgian's attitude in the Congo, the German's in South-West, the Portuguese's on the East Coast. And, at least, there are never, in South Africa, as in America, burnings and lynchings of black men.

But, in the end, except for the English ideal, for the Cape tradition, for the passionate service of here and there a hot-hearted South African, the Kaffir has little hope of generous treatment in the midst of the white people.

CHAPTER IV

I

THE Englishman in South Africa, as has just been indicated in connection with the native question, is, in many respects, not quite the same sort of person as his brother in England. And, indeed, one may distinguish the Englishman in three ways—according to whether he is at home, abroad, or born of the soil of a dominion.

The man born in South Africa of English (that is to say, British) parents is more like the Boer than he is like his fellow who has never left England. He is also a big, lusty creature, springing upwards vigorously under that sun which makes a tree a full-grown thing in a few years. He has greater kinship with him too, since they are both South Africans, and South Africa is his home, as it may have been the home of three generations of his ancestors. To-day, in fact, except among the die-hards of both races, there is little talk of South African Dutch and South African British. Most people consider themselves simply—the word is, unfortunately, not very euphonious—Afrikaners. They associate, they marry, as people of one nationality: Smith or Smit—there is no difference.

But the Englishman who comes to live here in the spirit of one whose dust is for ever England, inevitable and touching though his attitude may be—that one remains essentially a foreigner in South Africa.

The People in South Africa To-Day

And, not only that, he changes his character as an Englishman too, for he carries his nationality about with him like the quills of a porcupine. He loses the smooth and genial charm of the Englishman at home, and disports himself abroad with an assertive affectation, emphasising his distinction from what he regards as the Colonial.

And it is just this habit of his which makes him an Uitlander, an Outlander, in the Union as it made him in the 'Transvaal Republic. The South African has quite a sincere admiration for the Englishman. He may not acknowledge it, but considering the matter judicially, and comparing the English with this nation or with that and seeing perfection nowhere, he cannot but help coming to the reasoned and not hyperbolical conclusion that, after all, no other race is finer.

Nevertheless, he has a quite human objection to being considered anything but the Englishman's equal, nor does he like to be thought of as a Colonial. To himself the South African is not a Colonial—a little brother. He is a citizen of the British Empire of South African nationality. He does not care—although he tries to correct it—to be told that he has a Colonial accent. He does not admit—although he tries to bring them into line—that his customs are not as good as English customs. He does not like to hear England called “home,” as if South Africa were exile. He will not be patronised. And, instinctively and defensively, he clings in comradeship to his fellow South African without consideration of what his ancestry may be.

The South Africans

2

He feels almost as distant from the young South African who has had what amounts, here, to the disadvantage of an English public school education. For while the youth who goes from South Africa to an English university comes back different only to the extent of enlargement and improvement, the boy who is taken to an English public school returns to the land of his birth estranged from it in character and outlook. That is, in part, the idea. He is to develop like the son of an English gentleman rather than like the son of a South African gentleman. And it is true that, in some ways, his experience does him good—it gives him what, if he remained in England, might be a valuable manner. Unfortunately for himself, he does not remain in England: he has to come back to where his home and future lie. And then he finds that he has, during his formative years, got out of touch with his contemporaries, and, somehow or other, he can never get into touch with them again. He has lost his easy simplicity. He is a little haughty about local institutions—and, indeed, not very interested in them. He has a different set of ideas and aspirations, and a different standard for people. He doesn't know Afrikaans—and a South African must these days know Afrikaans, for it is the equal partner of English. And, on top of everything, there is a mutual shyness.

The end of it is, he is as much an Englishman in South Africa as if he had been born in England: he is an Uitlander.

The South African, on the other hand, who has attended an English university loses nothing and gains much. He frequently goes after he has completed his

The People in South Africa To-Day

course at a local university—at about the age of twenty. By that time he has established friendships which a few years' interruption will not destroy. He has an appreciation of his South African nationality. He knows his Afrikaans. And if his English accent is improved, it is not so ennobled as to outrage ears accustomed to a less distinguished intonation.

He has, at the same time, acquired manners rather better than those which are customary in South Africa, a certain affinity with culture, and, occasionally, some knowledge. And if, as happens often enough, he has achieved also a triumph in sport, the reputation whose beginnings he laid before he went away is suitably sealed.

By English universities, of course, South Africans mean Oxford or Cambridge. Except for a special professional purpose it is not considered worth while to go overseas to any other university.

The point is that South Africans of whatever descent, are becoming patriotic these days. It has already been shown how, following the Boer War, the aggressive habit of the English, the defensive habit of the Dutch, were toned down. It had been a question of race which involved also (as frequently happens) a question of class, and the solution (as also frequently happens) had been found in a name. When the Englishman was prepared to call himself a South African, when he was prepared to call the Boer a South African, he wiped out, in a sweep, the past, and made a setting for the future. Two men who give themselves and each other the same description are not far from being the same thing. At least, they are willing to help each other to be the same thing.

It is perhaps this realisation which is at the root of the feeling against the boy who is taken to England

The South Africans

that he may acquire an English instead of a South African tradition. A similar feeling is manifested against Rhodesia because she is too nervous and suspicious of the Dutch to enter the Union.

The new national spirit is offended.

CHAPTER V

I

THE new national spirit is not only, on occasion, offended. It can also be offensive. Deflected antipathies seek for other outlets. The Boer's prejudices against Indians and natives are spreading to the Englishman. The Englishman's reservations concerning Jews are spreading to the Boer.

There was a time, about half a century ago, when the Boer went further than merely to permit the Jew's presence in his land. He actually welcomed it.

The Jew's experience in South Africa has been unique. It can hardly have happened in any other part of the world that the Jew was discovered to be a long-lost elder brother.

The reason, like many other reasons in South Africa, is to be found in the Bible. The Boers are—or were—primarily an Old Testament folk. And if the Old Testament said a thing they believed it. If the Old Testament said that the Jews were the Chosen People—well, then, as far as the Boers were concerned, they were the Chosen People.

And, of course, there was this peculiar analogy between the Jews and the Boers. The Jews too had once been Voortrekkers. They had fled from Egypt to found themselves a national home. They had crossed the Red Sea, and sojourned in the wilderness, and drunk of the bitter waters of Marah. So had

The South Africans

the Boers fled from the oppressor, and crossed the Vaal, and sojourned in the wilderness, and drunk of bitter waters. All along their route there are Biblical names. Bethel and Bethlehem and Bethesda they have called their settlements, and Elim and Hebron. And there is too a Nylstroom, a River Nile, which it is said the Boers took to be the hidden source of the very Nile itself, reached in the course of their wanderings.

In short, the Boers were not dissatisfied to see the Jews. And, following a few early adventurers, English, German, and Hollander, there began to come, emerging bent and bewildered from the ghettos of Russia and Poland, fleeing from the pogroms, Jews who wrote to their friends and relations, and told them (as did those others who had gone to America of that country) that here was another Promised Land, that in Africa a man might go where he liked, do what he liked, say what he liked.

Other Jews began to come to Africa. They went across the veld with a pack of goods on their backs, and they halted at Boer farmhouses, and they sold the Boers their goods, and they told them how things were in the big world, and exchanged jokes with them, and slept there the night. A few months later they reappeared. But this time with a Cape cart and horses. Then they bought and sold ostrich feathers. Often they settled down somewhere and opened a shop. Then they imported a bewildered wife and several children, whom they traditionally intended for professional careers. . . . Or, if they were bachelors, women of their own kind being rare in these pioneering days, they married sometimes the big, solemn daughters of their Boer hosts.

But diamonds and gold had, by this time, been found, and they had brought a different sort of Jew

The People in South Africa To-Day

to South Africa : not so much the Russian or Polish Jew, cautiously lifting his humbled back, but a recurrent form of the earliest Jewish emigrants to South Africa : the self-confident English or German Jew who had a capacity for making money. He worked with diamonds and gold and concessions. He came to live in Johannesburg. Other Jews came to live in Johannesburg. There seemed to be quite a number of them about the place.

2

Nearly a third of the Jews in the Union—and there are, in round numbers, sixty-two thousand altogether—live on the Witwatersrand. That is to say, there are as many Jews on the Rand as in the Cape Province, and eight times as many as in Natal; and one person out of fifteen in Johannesburg and its surrounding townships is a Jew—but among the fifteen are, of course, the coloured races.

The general impression is that the proportion must be larger.

The trouble with the Jew is that he does not fade into the landscape; and it is not only his trouble, it is also his tragedy. He is different, and in certain respects he wishes to be different, but in other respects he is different against his will; and he suffers what Mr. Zangwill calls “the dislike of the unlike.” So that when he begins to spread himself people get the irritated feeling that, after all, he is an interloper, and ought not to absorb so much of the foreground.

Yet, even in South Africa, where the Jew has had the fullest opportunities, he is not as all-pervading and prosperous as one might casually imagine. There is a Jew—an American naturally—who has amalgamated

The South Africans

the theatres and bioscopes, and has also large commercial, industrial, and agricultural interests throughout the country. He is on the way to doing big things with fruit, and will thus, probably, best serve South Africa. And there are some Jews at the head of the mining corporations. . . . But these live, for the most part, in Europe, and their local lieutenants are not Jews, nor do they readily employ Jews. . . .

The produce businesses and the wholesale businesses—except the most important—are largely in the hands of Jews. There is a central street in Johannesburg whose signboards read like the names in the “Potash and Perlmutter” stories. Jews are also, in South Africa as in many other parts of the world, jewellers, manufacturers, and small hucksters, and the concession stores on the mines seem to be entirely their province. But they do not own the big retail shops, or the department stores. In the shopping areas—except as buyers, of course—they count for very little.

Nor are they manual workers or miners. But, on the other hand, they are perhaps more by reason of their organising capacity than through love of the soil, among the most progressive farmers in the Union. The maize, ostrich feather, and potato “kings” are all Jews.

In the professions—at least, in law and medicine—they have become, during the last two decades, prominent. But, except that two Jews are on the bench, their prominence is, at present, chiefly numerical, nor have they achieved outstanding positions in politics. No Jew has yet been a Cabinet Minister, although there are a number in the Legislature. There have, however, been many Jewish mayors in the bigger, as in the lesser, towns.

The universities are full of Jews. Those pedlars

The People in South Africa To-Day

who, forgetting their own intellectual desires, went trekking across the veld in search of freedom, have fulfilled their ambitions vicariously. It is, quite often, their children who are the students.

3

The Jew is, on the whole, happier in Johannesburg than anywhere else in the world. Perhaps because not so long ago Johannesburg was a primitive mining town, there is still something fraternal and tolerant about its spirit. It bears its Jews, on the whole, amiably. And when the big Jewish festivals come round, and there are columns in the papers filled with advertised good wishes, and the shops placard their goods "for the Jewish holidays," and the Stock Exchange is shut, and the streets and cafés and places of amusement look suddenly very quiet, Johannesburg thinks again what a peculiar people the Jews are, and goes, without too much rancour, along its way.

4

But yet, in Johannesburg, as in the rest of South Africa, the position of the Jew is not what it was when he came knocking at lonely farmhouses in the old days offering, in a broken tongue, to sell the goods on his back. He was better liked—more welcome—in his rarity and pain than in his multiplicity and comfort.

And that, perhaps, is natural. 'The human soul is always kinder towards adversity than towards prosperity. It is not only, as has been said, easy to bear the troubles of others, it is also a little exhilarating. One's own burdens grow lighter by comparison, and

The South Africans

then there is something satisfactory in bestowing pity. It evokes a feeling of nobility and self-approbation.

On the other hand, there is nothing that makes so god-like a demand on human nature as for a benefactor to have to witness, without a qualm, the swelling of his beneficiary into a rival. . . .

And it is this which makes the position of the Jew in the world so difficult. He does not stay down. The will to succeed, the capacity for growth, are in his blood. Yet, if he achieves either, he achieves also suffering. There comes a point in his enlargement where his presence begins to irritate his host. It is a question of saturation, of the capacity of the melting-pot. A country will absorb so many Jews; will let them go so far. And then enough.

The country expresses its feeling of repletion in different ways—with politeness, with hauteur, with distaste, with rage. It ignores the Jew socially. It refuses to admit him nationally. It attacks him physically.

In these circumstances it is useless for the Jew to point out that he must live somewhere. The necessity is not admitted. He is not wanted, and there is the end of it.

The Boer still considers the Jew more easily than does any other nation in the world, but yet his feeling for him is not what it used to be. Partly it is this question of saturation, and then, also, a world prejudice cannot for ever be escaped.

The South African-born Jew of to-day is, in most respects, the superior of his ancestor. Like anything born of the soil of Africa, he is growing big and strong and vigorous. He is taller than his father who once lived in a Russian ghetto; he has the courage of his freedom; the mental alertness of his race; and a

The People in South Africa To-Day

standard of conduct that, in preceding generations, oppression may have tended to subdue. He is, besides, eager to identify himself with the land of his birth—and the Jewish tradition is kept alive in South Africa chiefly by its Russian immigrants, who passionately support Zionism. Nevertheless, he is becoming increasingly unpopular in South Africa. Neither socially nor economically is his presence, generally speaking, desired.

He fights against this; with reservations bears it; or, with pride, resents it. Administration of the immigration laws which involved the Jew unfavourably was, in part, responsible at the last election for the overthrow of the South African Party; and, as he is pushed aside, so he achieves with his fellows a racial solidarity which meets, often, with a general commercial and professional resentment.

He also learns sometimes to sympathise with others.

CHAPTER VI

I

INDIVIDUAL Jews, for instance, have been notably identified with the Indian movement in South Africa. That is to say, they have been disciples of Mr. Gandhi. For Mr. Gandhi not only made—he really was—that movement, and to tell his story is to tell the South African story of his people.

It was not in India nor in England, but in South Africa, that Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi learnt that there was an Indian question.

When, in 1888, at the age of nineteen, he came confidently to London, the son, the grandson, the nephew of chief ministers at the court of an Indian prince, to read for the English Bar, he had passed through spiritual and religious conflicts, but he had not yet awakened to the sense of a national conflict. He was prepared to like England. He did like England. He set himself (consider the withered ascetic in the loin-cloth of these days) to learn what he took to be the accomplishments of an English gentleman : dancing, elocution, French, and fiddling. But he was troubled in his intercourse with other English gentlemen by vows he had taken to abjure wine, flesh, and women. And, in the end, he gave up his dancing, his elocution, French, and fiddling, and went to live solitarily in a room on a vegetarian diet and a pound a week. Nevertheless, when he left England about

The People in South Africa To-Day

three years later, he was prepared to admit that, excluding India, he would rather live in London than anywhere else in the world.

Then he came to South Africa. He came as a barrister to fight a case, as a British Indian gentleman of birth and culture.

He landed at Durban, and discovered immediately that in South Africa the Indian is classed with the raw native.

On his first day in Durban he went into court, and sat there in his turban of an Indian barrister. He was ordered to remove his hat or leave the court. He left the court.

Having to be in Pretoria for his case, he took a first-class railway ticket. But a fellow-passenger objected to travelling with Indians, so Mr. Gandhi was sent into the van-compartment. He refused to go, and was forcibly ejected, and his luggage pitched out on to the platform. The train departed without him.

To complete his journey, he had to travel by coach. He happened to be sitting on the box-seat, and someone else wanted to sit there in order to smoke. He told Mr. Gandhi to accommodate himself at his feet, and when the Indian would not move, he struck him in the face.

So innocent was he still that, on arrival at Johannesburg, he drove up to an hotel. He was denied admission.

It seems likely that, at about this point, Mr. Gandhi began to consider the question of the status of the Indian. And he entered here upon a twenty-one-year struggle on behalf of his fellow-countrymen in South Africa.

It was after the Boer War that he became an attorney in Johannesburg.

The South Africans

2

In the Boer War Mr. Gandhi and his followers took the British side in the expectation that, since their grievances in the Transvaal had been a matter of much complaint against the Boer Government, their position would be alleviated. But they found, when the war was over, that the little finger of Lord Milner was thicker than the loin of President Kruger. Kruger had required them to pay a registration fee on entering the Transvaal, and had refused to allow them—officially—to own land. Lord Milner not only suggested that they should re-register—should go, indeed, further, and give their finger-prints as a means of distinguishing between residents and would-be immigrants—but sought to prohibit future immigration altogether.

And yet for this they could not blame Lord Milner as an individual. “I hold,” wrote Lord Milner, “that when a coloured man possesses a certain high grade of civilisation, he ought to obtain what I might call ‘white privileges,’ irrespective of his colour. . . . For the present, however, there is no prospect whatever of their prevailing, certainly as far as Asiatics are concerned. There is, perhaps, more chance in the case of the coloured people of South African birth; and no doubt their claim is a stronger one, inasmuch as they are natives of the country, and have no choice but to live here, while the Asiatics are strangers forcing themselves upon a community reluctant to receive them.”

That is the point: a community reluctant to receive them. White opinion was as much against the Indian in Lord Milner’s time as it is to-day. It was all very well, clamoured the white South African in the ears of Lord Milner, for an Indian to claim the privileges of a citizen of the British Empire, it was all very well

The People in South Africa To-Day

for the British Empire to feel a duty towards India, but where did he, the South African, come in? Was he to pay for Great Britain's generosity? Was he, burdened already with a problem of four black and coloured men to one white man, to be made the dumping-ground for the overflow of a polygamous people, hundreds of millions strong, coming out chiefly in the capacity of labourers, waiters, hawkers, and small tradesmen, forcing their European competitors out by under-selling and under-living them? Could he help it that India was a land where people got born and died with such depressing ease, and that existence bitterly depended there on whether the Lord sent a monsoon that year or not? He had his own house to keep in order, he could not allow the cheap and embarrassing Asiatic to force out the rare and precious European. He regretted that what suited the Empire did not suit South Africa, but he had to see to his own self-preservation.

Between the Indian and the South African stood the Imperial Government, anxious to do its duty towards the Indian, but still more anxious to conciliate the latest colony—very, very anxious not to interfere. After refusing on its own behalf to sanction any anti-Asiatic legislation, it left the matter in the hands of the Parliament newly set up by Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman in the Transvaal.

3

The new Government, represented in this matter by General Smuts as Colonial Secretary, went briskly to work. The compulsory registration of Asiatics, their identification by means of finger-prints, their almost

The South Africans

total exclusion from the Transvaal, were put into force. . . .

Mr. Gandhi approached General Smuts on behalf of his fellow Asiatics, making demands and suggestions, making diminishing demands and diminishing suggestions. Let there be any administrative restrictions they pleased, he finally said, let them admit in a year six Indians—no more than six, and only of the highest standing—six men to lead and stimulate the outlawed community in South Africa, but let there, nominally, at least, not stand any longer against all Asiatics this grievous Act branding them as one with criminals. . . . In opposing, in 1925, the Colour Bar Bill, brought in by General Hertzog's Government, General Smuts repeated Mr. Gandhi's words to him: "Do not dishonour us. We recognise that there must be distinctions, but do not cast a stigma upon us in the laws of your country. . . ."

But the repeal of the Act was refused. And it was now that, conciliation having proved useless, Mr. Gandhi had resource to the weapon which he then called Passive Resistance—the exercise of soul-force, but which he subsequently, in India, spoke of as non-co-operation.

4

It was in the exercise of Passive Resistance that Mr. Gandhi perfected his creed of self-abnegation. Governments might do what they chose with his body. His spirit was invulnerable. He and his followers refused to obey the Act. They moved in and out of the Transvaal without registering their finger-prints, went to gaol, worked out their sentences, again refused to register and again went to gaol. And, finally,

The People in South Africa To-Day

following a new Immigrants Regulation Act in 1913, a spectacular climax was achieved. Over two thousand Indians, led by Mr. Gandhi, defied the inter-provincial immigration laws which were calculated to stem an Indian incursion from Natal into the Transvaal, made a pilgrimage from Natal across the Transvaal border, and allowed themselves to be arrested.

That was the end of it. What could one do with a population that made it a point of honour to inhabit gaols?

General Smuts came to an agreement with Mr. Gandhi.

To-day the law excludes :

“Any person or class of person deemed by the Minister (of the Interior) on economic grounds or on account of standards or habits of life to be unsuited to the requirements of the Union or any particular province thereof. . . .”

It most decently (and that is now the tradition) makes no mention of Asiatics, and Mr. Gandhi was at last able to return to India, triumphant in the knowledge that there no longer stood “a stigma against us in the laws of your country. . . .”

But, of course, he knew, and General Smuts knew, and they shared their knowledge with everyone else, that “economic grounds” and “standards and habits of life” meant simply Asiatic, that it meant, indeed, with little qualification, Indians, British Indians.

General Smuts forthwith issued an order “deeming” all Asiatics on these grounds unsuited to the requirements of the Union. In 1924 the validity of this order was tested in the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, and it was upheld.

The South Africans

5

And the Indians in South Africa are to-day in a worse position than ever they have been.

In the old Republican days of the Transvaal there was passed a law which forbade Asiatics to own fixed property. The hardships of that law were avoided. Either the Asiatic—in general terms, the Indian—had his property registered in the name of a white trustee, and held a mortgage over it to safeguard his rights, or else—but that came later—he formed himself, with the co-operation of a friend or two, into a limited liability company, which, being merely an abstraction of law, an artificial person, separate and distinct from the personality of its shareholders, could naturally not be the subject of racial restrictions. It was all very simple. Hundreds of companies were formed. There was public agitation. The point was tested in the courts and found good. After all, a company *was* an artificial person. The agitation grew. Even the Great War did not stem it. Parliament was at last compelled to amend the law. In 1919 provision was made specifically to exclude from owning land such companies as were controlled by Asiatics, nor were Asiatics henceforth allowed to hold property under the guise of mortgagees. They could only, in pursuance of *bona fide* loan transactions, be mortgagors. Now, if their nominal white trustees become insolvent, they have no claim on their own property except as concurrent creditors for the value of the property. They take the risk.

Two years later a Government commission recommended, among other things, that “there should be no compulsory repatriation of Asiatics; but that

The People in South Africa To-Day

voluntary repatriation should be encouraged. . . . That there should be no compulsory segregation of Asiatics; but that a system of voluntary separation should be introduced. . . . That in Natal the right of Asiatics to acquire and own land for farming or agricultural purpose outside townships should be confined to the coast belt. . . . That there should be no relaxation in the enforcement of the Immigration Laws, and more active steps should be taken to deal with prohibited immigrants who have evaded the provisions of those laws. . . .”

In 1924 a Class Areas Bill was introduced by General Smuts. It failed to pass. But something much on the same lines—that is, compulsory segregation of Asiatics—is projected by the Pact Government together with its Colour Bar Bill, which, as has been said, classes Asiatics with natives, and is intended in practice equally to debar them from performing skilled work.

But the half-castes of South Africa, the Eurafricans, have suddenly, under the new Government, taken a leap upwards. “We white people are responsible for them, and must carry them with us” (or, as Lord Selborne once put it, “Give the coloured people the benefit of their white blood”), is, in effect, the attitude of General Hertzog to what are still sometimes called the Bastards of South Africa.

6

“But we have no duty to the Asiatics. We did not bring them here. We do not want them. They have their own country. It will, perhaps, be unpleasant for England if we make worse trouble than ever before with India. But we cannot help that. We cannot afford to be sentimental. It is a question

The South Africans

of our own self-preservation. It is a question of a white South Africa."

Expressed or understood, these are the sentences that follow the painful, but unavoidable, admission of responsibility for the half-castes.

Nor is it only the Nationalists who take up this attitude. Practically all the white people, English or Dutch, in South Africa are with the Government in their attempt to shut South Africa to the Indian.

7

A white South Africa. A white South Africa. In the Orange Free State, where the old Republican laws still prevent "Asiatics and other coloured persons from trading or carrying on any business whatsoever," there are altogether four hundred Asiatics. In the Cape, which maintains an amiable tradition towards colour, but has not so many opportunities for Asiatics and is not so near Natal as the Transvaal, there are eight thousand. In the Transvaal there are seventeen thousand. And in Natal there are one hundred and forty-five thousand, and they almost equal the white population.

It was in the year 1860 that the sugar planters of Natal begged a reluctant Government to allow them to import labour from India. The Kaffir, they said, could not do the work. He was less reliable and useful. He had a tendency to get homesick for his kraal. Let them indenture Indian labourers. They would pay the Indians ten shillings a month, rising yearly until, in the fifth and last year of their indentures, they would be getting fourteen shillings a month. One might plant sugar profitably like that. And one might encourage the Indians to settle in South Africa and

The People in South Africa To-Day

keep up the supply of labour by giving them land instead of return passages to India. Or, at least, one might provide for their remaining in South Africa five years after the expiry of their indentures.

The Indians began to come to Natal. They poured into Natal, and, on the African coast of their own Indian Ocean, they propagated their species. They spread themselves comfortably over the land, not as trespassers, not merely as licensed foreigners, but as invited compatriots, escorted into the country by monetary grants from the Government. . . .

Until, in the 'nineties, those white people in Natal who were not planting sugar, found themselves making mathematical calculations. If the Indians went on increasing at their present rate——!

They began, in a panic, to take measures against Indian immigration. They compelled the deletion from the indenture contracts of the provisions that these labourers should remain in Natal five years after the expiry of their indentures. They prevented, by force, the landing of two shiploads of Indians. Their first Prime Minister, Mr., afterwards Sir Harry, Escombe, introduced Bills, which subsequently became the Licensing and Immigration Laws of 1897, pointing out that "Unless an arrestation was put upon the introduction of immigrants from India, the whole social polity would be disturbed . . ." and that, "having regard to the character of the people who were coming into the country (deck passengers, as a rule, who paid only two pounds or so for their passage, and who were, therefore, in no very flourishing condition of life), it was easy for the whole of the population of this country to be, as it were, submerged by the new arrivals, entailing a competition which was simply impossible as far as Europeans were concerned, whether

The South Africans

in trade or agriculture, on account of the different habits of life."

The system of indentured labour was, however, allowed to continue, though without Government grants, until 1911, and in that year the sugar planters made final efforts to import as many labourers as possible.

In 1924 there were one hundred and forty-five thousand Asiatics—that is, in practical effect, Indians—in Natal, as against ten thousand in 1876. More than half the Indians of the indentured class have been born in South Africa, and many are in the fourth generation.

The story is told of an Englishman, recently arrived in Durban, who suggested that the Indians ought to return to their own country. "How long have you been here?" asked an Indian. "Two months." "Then it is for you, and not for me, to go home. This is my country. I was born here, and my father was born here, and my grandfather was born here."

That, and not unjustifiably, is the Indian's attitude. He was asked to come to Natal, and now Natal is his home, and he likes it. As a worker on a sugar plantation he is paid to-day, according to his capacity, anything from thirty-seven shillings and sixpence to twenty-five pounds a month; he goes to school, becomes an artisan, a clerk, a small trader, a farmer, a merchant, and, occasionally, a professional man. If his father was a scavenger, he is not, as he would be if he remained in India under its caste system, also condemned to be a scavenger. He is still allowed the same land rights and privileges as Europeans, and comes under the same liquor laws, although, as regards trading licences, he falls under the authority of his municipality and may thus suffer discrimination in favour of European competitors. . . . Why, then, should he go

The People in South Africa To-Day

back to an India he does not know, to contend with its swarming multitudes, its terrible taboos, its sahibs and its famines?

But where an Indian trader comes, a European has to go. Where an Indian boy is employed, a white boy's pride is insulted. Where an Indian buys a home, a locality loses class. Where an Indian settles on the land, the neighbouring farmers will not stay, and since only Indians will buy the contaminated estate, the ground comes gradually to be transferred into exclusively Indian hands.

Now the Transvaal is pointing its finger to Natal as an example of what may happen when restrictions are relaxed. There is much talk of an Asiatic menace, some fair, but some unfair; anti-Asiatic associations are formed, Asiatic traders are boycotted, and it has even happened that their shops have been picketed to prevent the approach of buyers.

Finally, when an eleventh Minister was recently to be included in the Cabinet, a member with many claims on his party was rejected because he was chairman of a company which included Indian shareholders.

Of all this hostility, the measures which are now being brought forward in Parliament to class the Asiatic with the Kaffir are the inevitable result. And although it is perhaps true that, as a notable South African politician remarked privately, the ordinary South African Indian is of a caste shunned by those very men who, in India, urge the extension of Indian privileges in South Africa ("We'll bring one of them out, and see how he himself likes to rub shoulders with his fellow-countrymen here"), although the Asiatic in South Africa is not necessarily a person of the highest culture or standing, yet it is not surprising that a son

The South Africans

of Mr. Gandhi has returned to his father's earliest battle-ground to spur his race once more to battle. . . .

But the first thing that happened to him was that, history repeating itself, he was summoned, as was his father a generation ago, for travelling in a first-class railway compartment not reserved for Asiatics.

The Asiatic and the Kaffir: the descendant of nations that cradled all the religions of the civilised world, and the savage of the kraal—it is an ironical association.

And the Eurafrican, he in whose veins runs the corruption of white and black, he is to be classed with the white man.

CHAPTER VII

I

THE Eurafrican is to be classed with the white man because—so the Nationalist formula runs—the white man is responsible for his existence.

And it is true, of course. The coloured man is the fruit of the vice, the folly, the thoughtlessness of the white man.

In the old days—taking one aspect of the matter—there were colonists who, like Biblical patriarchs or monarchs, had their official and their unofficial households, their white wives and their Hottentot handmaids. But they used their slave-women as Abraham used Hagar rather than as Solomon used the Shulamite. The association was devoid of lyricism. No Hottentot girl ever preened herself before her white lord, declaiming : “ I am black, but comely.” When the Abrahams were done with their Hagers, they sent them with their Ishmaels into the wilderness.

And God said : “ Also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.”

2

The sons of the bondwomen of the old Cape settlers are a nation to-day : not an accident, a group, a clan, a class, but a nation, a people. They call themselves the Cape people. A white man living in the Cape

The South Africans

Province may not be referred to as a Cape man. A Cape man is a coloured man.

And these Cape people form almost half the population of Cape Town, and are as one to three to the white inhabitants of the Union. They have a definite physical type, a characteristic accent, even a characteristic laugh. They associate with one another, as Greeks or Germans or Jews or Indians or Englishmen associate with one another. They marry within their national bounds. They perpetuate their national traditions. They do not enter the villas of the white, or the kraals of the black. They are despised by each. Yet more strongly than the black despise them do they despise the black, and the careless aversion the pure white man has for the native is, in the case of the half-caste, intensified by secret, subconscious, fear, and the nearness to danger.

It is not the author of his calamity that the Cape man abhors, not the man who deprived him of his heritage and sowed disaster in a clean land. Of his white blood he is terribly proud. It is the black man that calls up the bitterness in his heart, the reflection of the shamed, betrayed, and desolate half within himself.

3

That is one kind of half-caste in South Africa, the nearest kind to the white. But there are other kinds. There are the Bastards, the Griquas, the Reheboths; there are the Bondelswarts, the Zwaartboois and the Witboois—the Blackboys and the Whiteboys; there are other nominally Hottentot tribes that are yet compounded with white; there are the casual begettings of the days as they pass. Not all of these are within the Union. . . .

The People in South Africa To-Day

The Bastards and Griquas are, roughly speaking, tribes further removed from the pure white than are the Cape people. Where the Cape people have a little Malay blood in them—for the Malays and the Hottentots were once slaves together—these other half-castes have native blood in them. Where the Cape people have, very often, straight black hair, they have, invariably, fuzzy hair, sometimes a shade or two lighter in colour. Where the Cape people have always clung together in the wake of their European owners and ancestors, imitating them as far as possible, and trying to forget the Hottentot half in them, the Bastards and Griquas have wandered away in tribes and clans, not too proud to mingle occasionally with the aboriginals of the country, and yet, at the same time, assertive of a peculiar national identity.

There was a period, for instance, when the Griquas actually had a kingdom of their own, and were ruled by a dynasty of the surname of Kok. In the year 1860, these Griquas, led by Adam Kok III, crossed the Drakensberg Mountains, and occupied a piece of land near Natal, whose name they changed from Nomansland to Griqualand East, and whose capital still exists as Kokstad.

Adam Kok III was almost illiterate, with the typical brown skin, thick, woolly hair, and little difficult beard of his tribe. On important occasions he wore a state dress of blue and purple, with scarlet tassels and imitation gold chains, and, on his head, a black bowler, and, on his feet, *veldschoenen*—veld-shoes of rough hide.

But he was the ally of the Queen of England, and he ruled his kingdom on constitutional lines, with a Parliament of deputies sent from about half-a-dozen wards. The proceedings were conducted in Dutch; the session lasted until the ox that was killed at the

The South Africans

opening was consumed ; the revenues of the country took the form of cattle, horses, sheep, and goats ; and the Treasury was, naturally, a kraal.

The Government had power to make treaties, wage wars, and execute criminals, but its laws were in a fluid and uncertain state because the records were not regularly kept, and so no one was ever sure what the Parliament had decided. And justice was in the hands of a resident magistrate who was chosen for the position largely as he had no other means of livelihood, and who paid himself and his officials with the court fees and fines. Then, when it was felt he had made enough out of his job, he was set aside, and the next needy man on the list was given a turn on the bench.

It was a system of government which was adequate to the needs of the people, and since no gold or diamond or platinum fields have been found in Griqualand East, the Griquas might still—who knows?—have been there, if they had not so luxuriously despised work. But, sooner than roughen their hands with toil, they sold the farms that had been assigned to them at threepence an acre, and their building plots for a pound or two in cash, an old suit—indeed, anything tangible.

To-day self-governing half-caste tribes like the Bondelswarts and the Reheboths still exist in South-West Africa to trouble the souls of their white neighbours (the Bondelswarts rose a few years ago in connection with a dog-tax, and the Reheboths have recently claimed the protection of the League of Nations), but the Griquas have lost their Griqualand East. The white man bought them out as simply as he bought them out in the Free State and in the Transvaal, and as he bought out the associated tribe under Waterboer in the Diamond Fields.

The People in South Africa To-Day

These Griquas are the people whom the Kaffirs, without malice, call Bastaards. And, indeed, they themselves like the title, for it emphasises their white blood. But that is mere snobbery on their part. They forwent the description when their missionaries, as has been said, changed their name to Griqua; and the authentic Bastaards were a clan, much lighter in colour, who wandered about along the Vaal River under the leadership of one Barend Barends.

However, what does it matter to-day? The Bastaards and the Griquas are alike confused and further confused so that no one knows where their white exists, where their Hottentot begins and their Bantu ends. And if they were to come along and claim white privileges from the Nationalist Government, the very half-castes of the Cape would resent the association.

4

For it is specifically these Cape people the Nationalists mean to advance, but, even if one knows the type, it is going to be a still more delicate matter to distinguish a Cape person than merely, as now, a coloured person. What is a coloured person? In the United States a coloured person is anyone from a fair-haired type with a tinge of black blood in him to a full-blooded African. And, at the same time, a Negro is anyone from a full-blooded African to a fair-haired type with a tinge of black blood in him. There is no distinction: a coloured person is a Negro, and a Negro is a coloured person.

In Virginia, for instance, a man with not more than a sixteenth of Indian blood is classed, for marriage purposes, as a Caucasian. But if a man with the slightest percentage of Negro blood marries a white

The South Africans

woman, they may not, legally, live in the State of Virginia.

But there are divisions in South Africa. In South Africa a coloured person is, officially, a non-European. According to the laws of the land a Kaffir, a Hottentot, a half-caste and an Asiatic (except a Syrian) are all coloured people. On the other hand, colour is merely a visual definition. A man is as white as he looks. If he seems to be a white man he may, for instance, be sold liquor in the Transvaal, or own property there, or vote there, or marry white. Who is going to ask him to produce his genealogical table? And if a child of mixed blood looks white, and its relations do not unduly obtrude themselves, it may go to a white school, but its darker brother or sister will be refused admission.

Socially, indeed, South Africa is kinder to the European than is America. In South Africa a drop of black blood is, if possible—and despite all talk to the contrary—ignored. In America it is hunted out. South Africa, in short, classes with the white any person who can conceivably pass as white, where America classes with the Negro any person who can conceivably pass as Negro.

Here it all depends, metaphorically, on the bribe that is offered. Although there is a good deal of romantic shuddering over hidden drops of black blood, that is only conventional hypocrisy. If a person suspected of colour, but not obviously dark, can pay his way in the coinage of success he may enter anywhere; he is not rejected socially or even matrimonially. Both past and future are taken on trust. It is a species of blackmail. If he makes it worth the world's while to say nothing, the world will smile knowingly, will hold out its hand, and nod its head.

The People in South Africa To-Day

Nor does that attenuated strain of blackness seem, in effect, to make much difference. There have been in South Africa people filling high positions, people receiving flattery and respect, and it is a commonplace of conversation that they had colour in them.

5

Still, even at best, the eye is the final arbiter. If a man's pigmentation is so dark that the eye cannot be prevailed upon to ignore it, nothing will help him into the ranks of the white.

Across the Transvaal border, in Portuguese territory, one may meet coloured people everywhere. They attend at Government functions; dine at the best hotels; play together, black, brown and white, in orchestras; make a sinister appearance in white families. Indeed, one gets to the stage of wondering how many families really are white at Lourenço Marques and its surrounding country, and of remembering how, centuries ago, the Portuguese colonised East Africa and lost themselves and their power in Africa by ignoring the colour of their skins.

But then the Latins are, in general, not much perturbed by the incidence of colour. France is notoriously ready to employ black troops against white. And if South Africa were to examine its heart, and ask itself searchingly why, with the best will, it finds it really does not love France, it will receive as an answer the word "colour." South Africa is afraid of a nation that so easily over-rides the colour question, that so menacingly says: "France is not a nation of thirty-nine million inhabitants, but one of a hundred million subjects."

In South Africa, if a man does not, at least, seem

The South Africans

white, he may be a genius or he may be a millionaire (geniuses and millionaires, however, have not yet appeared among the coloured folk of Africa), but he cannot be sold a drink in the Northern Provinces; he cannot marry a white woman, except in the Cape; he cannot sit in the stalls, or enter a good hotel, or travel among white people anywhere in South Africa.

Mr. Gandhi, who is a saint, could not travel with Europeans. The late Mr. Gokhale, a Brahmin of the highest caste, a distinguished member of the Viceroy's Council, visiting Johannesburg on political business, had to climb several flights of stairs because the lift-man had standing orders not to carry coloured passengers. Sobhuza, the Paramount Chief of the Swazis, who has had a European education, travelling a few years ago on a mission to England, had to go second-class. . . .

Geniuses and millionaires have, it has just been said, not happened among the coloured folk of South Africa. The Griqua type of half-caste, in considering such a question, may be dismissed at once. He is a compound of the lowest strains the country can show, he is lower than the Kaffir—such things cannot be expected of him. The man with just the merest touch of colour, if it can possibly be ignored, and if he can make such ignoring worth while, passes as white. In discussing coloured people as a class one means, in South Africa, the Cape people, that nation descended from the association of white and Hottentot and Malay, and Heaven knows what besides.

Although it is from their ranks that, through a succession of upward chances spreading over generations, there emerges this person who may come to be accepted as white, the Cape people are a quite clearly-defined and self-contained race. Their stature is

The People in South Africa To-Day

midway between that of their European and Hottentot ancestors. They have, often, the oval face and straight, coarse, black hair of the intruding Malay. Although a child, in the first generation of mixed blood, born of a European father and a Kaffir mother (a much darker type, that is, than the Hottentot), has frequently light hair and eyes, the interbred Cape people are, almost invariably, dark-haired and dark-eyed; and, quite often, they are a deeper brown in colour than their Hottentot forbears. When they are light enough to freckle there has probably been a recent incursion of white blood.

Their colloquial medium of intercourse is Afrikaans, but, on social occasions, they speak English. Their habits and manners are modelled on those of the Europeans. They dress and live in European style. They are, many of them, astonishingly capable with their hands; they make good carpenters, mechanics, servants. But it has not yet happened in the history of South Africa that a really coloured man, a man so dark that he could not, even by a general conspiracy of evasion, pass as white—it has not yet happened that such a one has distinguished himself in any branch of achievement whatsoever. No Cape coloured man has risen to high rank in commerce, art, science, the professions, or politics. Hardly any coloured man, indeed, has even gone so far as the son of some aboriginal chief, rich in land and cattle, who, now and then, struggles through an English or Scottish university to a profession, and then comes back to South Africa to practise that profession. The young African, it is true, does not gloriously succeed either. His difficult circumstances apart, he has not the persistence, the temperament, the tradition, the mental quality, the general capacity, to compete against his white

The South Africans

colleagues. But yet, in merely making the attempt, he does something which seems to be beyond, not only the ambition, but also the means, of the young coloured man.

There are still a few Kaffir chiefs who have possessions, but the Cape people are, as a rule, poor, thrust-aside folk. There exists hardly a coloured man who can afford to send his son overseas to study; and although colour does not, technically, debar anyone from a university education in South Africa, the position of a coloured youth at college—it has been tried—is unbearably painful. In the result he does not achieve a higher education at all.

6

It is perhaps for the very reason that the coloured man is so near the white man that the will to succeed is not in him. There is the constant comparison, the constant distinction, the instituted order of things. It has been held through the generations that he should stand below the white man. For him to aspire to compete against the white man, to have dreams of drawing, in any respect, level with him, would seem almost like a violation of nature. Although the coloured man vociferates sometimes that his heart is as white as the white man's, that he does not consider himself anyone's inferior, his attitude is a mere pathetic bluff. It is this very heart he speaks of, the spirit within him, that is not white. However he may have proved himself in war to be not deficient in physical courage, it is as if the darkness of his skin descends also on his soul when it finds itself pitted against a white man.

And how should it be otherwise? Consider his

The People in South Africa To-Day

ancestry. In his veins runs, on one side, the blood of slaves ; on the other side, the blood of the careless, the selfish, the stupid, the vicious. Consider his life—unwanted by the world, born into ostracism. Whence, poor betrayed being, shall pride and hope and courage come to him ? It happens sometimes, of course, that there is born in a coloured family some pretty girl who honourably attracts a white man—and, indeed, many white artisans in Cape Town prefer to marry coloured girls . . . they say such girls make fewer demands, can manage better on small wages—it does occur that a Cape girl and a white man may make a decent marriage, and the dark blood may come to be bleached out in their descendants until it seems to make no practical difference. But then the final twist of tragedy is achieved in the shame the child has in the colour of his mother, so that he hides her, and shuns her, and denies her. Yet then, too, the leap is often taken from the coloured ranks into the white ranks.

In no circumstances, however, can the coloured man, as a coloured man, hope to pass as the white man's equal. And if he cannot hope, he does not hope. It is the spiritual factor not less than any intellectual factors that hinders the advance of the coloured man.

And so he lives among others of his kind, and he approaches the white man only as an inferior.

7

But that the Cape man is a civilised being must be firmly insisted upon. He is more civilised than the European peasant, more civilised than the South African backwoodsman or the poor white. He has a more cultivated mind.

The South Africans

To begin with, he is generally a town-dweller, and, as has already been mentioned, his tastes and habits are copied from those of the European. He likes a concert, a bioscope, and a dance. He goes to school. He belongs to a Coloured Boys' Brigade, a Church, a Society, a Lodge. His persiflage is that of the lower metropolitan classes. The flirtation of young Cape people or the conversation of old Cape men and women is probably very similar to flirtations and conversations conducted in the East End of London.

And yet the less civilised white peasant of Europe is to this extent the coloured man's superior: the blood in him is stronger for advancement. Given the opportunity, the descendant of serfs may become a Tchekov. But the child of colour, unless his colour is attenuated to the verge of vanishing point, does not seem to have in him the ability to rise.

It is as if the offspring of the originally mixed unions had, through generations, and through circumscription of life and interbreeding, achieved a definite, inferior, and static race: a race not given to wildness (its mothers were savages, but they were slaves); a race with something old and civilised about it (its fathers were Europeans); a race made up of weak materials and without the capacity for great spiritual or intellectual growth.

There are some who suggest that mixed breeds, unless replenished in a generation or two with the blood of one of the original stocks, tend to die out. The Griquas are instanced as an example of a people who, within half a century, are beginning to disappear. The Griquas, however, are not so much disappearing as becoming absorbed. And the Cape coloured people, inter-marrying as a regular thing, bear out Darwin's denial, in *The Descent of Man*, that mulattoes

The People in South Africa To-Day

and half-castes are infertile, and are, physically, at any rate, well-established.

8

Finally, there are also the half-castes—literally the half-castes—of the day's casual and idle begettings.

These are less like the Cape people than were even the Griquas. For the Cape people and the Griquas sprang originally from a common stock—one branch adhering to civilisation, and the other wandering off into the desert. But the half-castes of to-day are the first fruit of the association of white men with the native women of the country: the Zulu women, the Swazi women, the Basuto women, and their sisters of other tribes.

In native territories where there live a few unattached white men (most frequently men not born in the country, and therefore without a strong colour sense); on gold and diamond diggings; in locations on the outskirts of towns and villages, black women sit suckling yellow babies. Sometimes the babies have the black pepper-corned heads of their mothers, but sometimes they have fuzzy brown or rusty-coloured hair, and grey or yellowish eyes. And they grow up with their little black brethren in the locations or kraals, slightly despised by them, but, in the main, partaking of their lives as if Europe were not in them at all.

But now, of course, there is this Colour Bar Bill which the present Government will sooner or later pass, and under which, without any talk of a civilisation test, a coloured person will be able to do the same kind of work as a white person, but an Asiatic will be classed with an aboriginal. Nor does it end there. The

The South Africans

idea is that, not only economically, but also politically, the coloured person is to be ranged with the white; and that whereas the native will be segregated industrially, territorially, and politically, the coloured man will enjoy throughout the Union the rights he at present enjoys only in the Cape.

When these measures go through, and are inevitably followed by other legislation rooted in the same principle there ought to be quite a premium set on miscegenation. And, although it may be arranged that a child who has one aboriginal parent shall also fall under the ban, if this child—the son of a black woman and a white man—marries his cousin who was similarly begotten, then no such objection can be lodged against their offspring, and so he, with exactly the same proportion of black blood in him, will be merged in a scheme of life entirely divorced from that of his parents. And here will be added yet one more tragedy to the many tragedies of colour-confusion.

For the tragedies of colour are not only social and political and economic, they are also intimate. The child who can possibly pass as white shrinks from the mother whose dark skin betrays him. The white father who has begotten a half-caste family thrusts it behind him in shame, and, as far as one can see, he positively has no paternal feelings towards them. . . . From which one may arrive at the cynical conclusion that the love of parents and children is dependent on other things beside the tie of blood.

What happens is that, in the lonely places where the contempt of society does not hinder him, a white man will take a black woman to live with him in his house merely to satisfy his physical and domestic inclinations, will incidentally produce five or six half-caste children, and, unless he is tied down by his

The People in South Africa To-Day

circumstances, will then, without compunction, go his way back to civilisation, or wander off to another part of the country, take a new or younger woman, and have with her, too, a family.

In the old days, when there were no railways in South Africa, and civilisation was so difficult to come by that, for practical purposes, it barely existed, men, thrusting their ancestry, their traditions, their associations, their hopes, completely behind them, became what people sometimes call in South Africa "white Kaffirs." They merged themselves with the natives, stayed for ever with the wives they had bought and with their African children. But such men are rarer now. The half-caste children of to-day—those of the first mixed generation—are, in effect, fatherless. Casual and idle men, drunkards and shameless ones, have given them life. There are isolated places in South Africa where it is exceptional to find a white man who has not had association with black women, and in some locations there are not many households that cannot show a yellow child or two—not inevitably of one father—in their midst. But the children are repudiated because South African society will not suffer with equanimity what tropical Africa carelessly tolerates.

It is a state of affairs which natives of the better class deplore as much as do white people, and it occurs chiefly among tribes that are degenerating, tribes that have emancipated themselves from allegiance to their own chiefs or ideals, that have no land or possessions, that have yielded their own traditions and have acquired very little from white civilisation with which to replace the loss.

PART VII

The People in South Africa To-Day

B.

THE KAFFIR

CHAPTER I

I

THAT, for the Kaffir himself, is the chief tragedy—the irretrievable, uncompensated loss. When he came sweeping down the east coast from the North three centuries ago, all Southern Africa seemed to be his province. He was bold and virile and prolific. He bore traces of Asiatic blood on his body—his pigmentation, that was lighter than the Negro's, his differently shaped head, his frequently curved nose and almond eyes and oval contour of cheek-line. In some of his customs too he carried the East with him. . . . And there are many who believe that, as Selous, the hunter says, “The blood of the ancient builders of Zimbabwe still runs, in a very diluted form, in the veins of the Bantu races, and more especially among the remnants of the tribes still living in Mashonaland and the Barotsi of the Upper Zambesi.”

But what is the origin of the Bantu races? No one knows. Who were the builders of Zimbabwe? No one knows. The word *Aba-ntu* means simply “human beings,” and Europeans have applied the term to the black men of Africa. And a *zimbabwe* is the stronghold of a chief, but has come to mean certain ruins in Rhodesia.

There these ruins stand in this country Rhodes took from the Matabele, half a thousand witnesses to the story of Africa. But the language they speak is foreign to our ears, and our interpretation of it is only conjecture.

The South Africans

We can think of lost cities. We can see in the ruins the remains of palaces, temples, fortresses. We can reconstruct into an edifice of romance the conical towers, the stairs and floors, the granite monoliths, the parallel passages—rows upon rows—seventy, eighty, a hundred uneven rows of granite blocks mounting upwards face to face. On a kopje surveying the world around there rest the remains of what is to-day called the acropolis—there are its walls and passages and recesses and caves and temples and strange symbols and birds of stone that Epstein might have carved. . . .

And some people say that no African, no Bantu, built that dead city. They say that men must have come from other lands to do it. They say that religious rites that were never born in Africa were once practised in temples between the Zambesi and the Limpopo; that Phœnicians once landed on the coast of Mozambique and came to dig for gold in this land of Rhodesia and built homes there, and worshipped Baal and Astarte, and sacrificed black bulls as certain African tribes still do to-day.

They say that further back even than the Phœnicians there came Indians and Arabs, and took away a hundred million and more pounds' worth of gold, and planted trees and flowers and fruits which are still found in Rhodesia and nowhere else in Africa. They say, indeed, that the gold of King Solomon's Temple once lay under the earth of Africa, and that Southern Rhodesia is the very land of Ophir, and that Sheba's Queen came from the River Sabi in Rhodesia. . . .

But Milton speaks of Sofala as Ophir :

“Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,
And Sofala thought Ophir, to the Realm
Of Congo, and Angola farthest south.”

The People in South Africa To-Day

Others, however, see in these ruins only a great kraal—a zimbabwe, a chief's house and stones, such as occur elsewhere too, though on an infinitely lesser scale. And they admire the patience, the ingenuity, the massiveness of the construction, but for all that no African tribe of to-day could execute such a work, they find no reason to suppose that the Zimbabwe was not built by some Bantu tribe in the fourteenth or fifteenth century.

According to their view, if the Bantu show traces of Eastern origin, history need not go back to the days of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba for the explanation.

In what is to-day Portuguese East Africa the port of Sofala, on the river of that name, was once the chief town of a great Arabian state, a harbour, before the sand conquered it, able to hold a hundred vessels, and, as the crow flies, it is the nearest port to Rhodesia. And Eastern men landed at that port, and came inland to trade with the black men of the country in slaves and gold and ivory. And now, therefore, there are Bantus on whose African faces the East has left its mark.

The very name Kaffir was given to them (Kafir—an unbeliever) by the Arabs on the east coast of Africa.

2

Well, these Bantus began to come south. The Portuguese, the English, the Dutch, did not find them in the country when they landed at the Cape. It was only towards the end of the seventeenth century, a generation or so after van Riebeck occupied the Cape, that they were met on the east coast by sailors shipwrecked at Delagoa Bay. It was only in the eighteenth

The South Africans

century, as the whites moved north and the blacks moved south, each wiping away the little aboriginals of the land—the Hottentots and Bushmen—that the great colour clash, whose climax is in the future, began.

To-day the children of the race of 'Tchaka, the king of the Zulus, who once “ate up” great tracts of Africa, and a million enemies and subjects; of Dingaan, his brother, the Vulture, who murdered the trusting Voortrekkers; of Moselikatze, who, seceding from 'Tchaka, swept bare the land across the Vaal, sparing only those weakest of the peoples on whose behalf a missionary had interceded, and challenged the advancing Dutch, and now sits upright in death on the same Matoppo Hills where Rhodes lies; of Moshesh, the Chief of the Mountain, the wise and wily Basuto chief who knew when to make war and how to make peace, and where to take profit by the mistakes of others, and made primitive chat with Kruger, dismissing contention with the words, “Well, what shall I say to you? . . . It is just nature” . . . they are all, all the black people who were once friends and enemies to one another and challenged the march of civilisation, they are all the charges, the servants, the dependents, the victims, the problems of the white man.

CHAPTER II

I

It has been pointed out before that the Bantus, the Kaffirs, the Africans, the natives, the aboriginals, the black people—whatever one chooses to call them, and they are commonly, if not literally, described by all these terms—are no more one nation than are the inhabitants of any single European country. Without further consideration of the Bushmen who have passed away, and the Hottentots who can hardly, any more, be found as a pure race, the Bantus, divided as they are into the two great groups—the Zulu-Xosas and the Basuto-Bechuanas—are compounded of numerous distinct and often hostile tribes. There are (not confining the description strictly to the Union, and speaking by no means exhaustively) Shangaans and Zulus and Swazis and Matabele and Damaras and M'Chopi. There are Amabaca and Amahangweni and Amaxesibi. There are Pondos and Gaikas and Galekas and Tembus. There are Fingoes. There are Bechuanas and Mashonas and Barotse and Basutos and Baralongs and Batlapins. . . .

They have their different taboos, their different customs, even their different dances. They look different. They have their traditional enmities. A Shangaan may have, as has been suggested, more Arab blood in him than any other native, but a Zulu regards him as an inferior, will not readily associate with him, and does not care to work with him. On the

The South Africans

mines, where men of different tribes find themselves thrown into involuntary proximity, an old feud will sometimes rise out of the wine-bottle, and there will be fights to the death. And both there and at home members of a man's own tribe will rally round him, but a wanderer from a hostile tribe intrudes at his peril.

Then again the Fingoes—their name is actually a term of contempt because they are a nation composed of war-broken and fugitive remnants—are despised by the more warlike peoples, but actually, for the very reason that they were martially disabled, they are the furthest advanced in civilisation of all the Bantus. And after them come the Basutos, smaller and physically inferior to the superbly-built Zulus and Tembus, but the only tribe that have a measure of self-government. So much, Europeans may note, did their cautious Moshesh do for them, where the magnificent, the victorious, the Napoleonic T'chaka left a people that, trained for fighting, found itself in days of peace without an economic tradition and without occupation.

However, if one chooses to be æsthetic rather than practical, one has to admit that the Zulus (and that, too, may be the result of T'chaka's ruthlessness) are the finest of all the black races—indeed, from the point of view of their bodies, probably the most perfect race in the world. They are about six feet in height, and their lines are those immortalised by the master sculptors. It is a commonplace to describe them as bronze statues, but, naked and anointed, that is what they actually do look like. The Basutos are nearly half a foot shorter than the Zulus, as their own little Basuto ponies, that so sturdily climb the highlands of their country, are smaller than ordinary horses.

The People in South Africa To-Day

The Zulus, too—again their history stands behind them—have a more aristocratic and self-confident bearing than most of the other tribes. To-day they tend babies and wipe floors, and come and go as they are told to come and go, but now and then the old spirit leaps out, and a mistress telling a Zulu servant to do something which he considers beneath him, and asking him, with a sneer, if he thinks himself a gentleman, will be met with the haughty response: “Yes. I gentleman.” And the house-boy, in the white drill suit which is his customary wear, as he lays the table, will remark: “My friend at home say I coward.”

2

But, coward or not, it is an unquestionable fact that the Zulu, the native in general, of to-day, is drifting towards the towns as any country lad tends to do. And, not only that, his view-point as to what constitutes manly dignity is changing. The town native (the store or house-boy rather than the mine native), whose friends at home call him coward, regards those same friends with urban contempt.

He has a tendency nowadays to arrange his social scale according to whether his contemporaries wear European clothing as a regular thing, or only while at work in the city, or not at all. He does not demand much of his father, who may have six wives, and whom he still traditionally, although not so unquestioningly, respects. But he speaks very slightly of men of his own generation who still wear a skin, either always or sometimes.

To him, not less than to his white master, are clothes a symbol. That a native goes clad in a suit rather than a skin or blanket means, probably, that he has attended

The South Africans

a school, that he speaks English, that he is a Christian, that he aspires to civilised rights and privileges, that he will marry only one wife.

It does not yet mean, however, that he is emancipated from the custom of *lobola*.

3

Lobola may best be defined as the opposite thing from a dowry. Where it happens that the European father pays his son-in-law to relieve him of his daughter—or, more delicately, assists his daughter to a more comfortable marriage—the Kaffir father expects to be duly compensated by his son-in-law for depriving him of the great treasure that he has put in the world and so sedulously tended.

There are people who deprecate this custom of *lobola*. They say it makes merchandise of a woman, and that she is put in the position of a slave who may be sold to the highest bidder. But *lobola* is, as it happens, one of the strongest moral influences among the natives. Where, in other parts of the world, the advent of a woman-child is regretted, so that even the most civilised of parents wish for sons rather than daughters, and certain ancient nations actually put their female babies to death, among the natives of South Africa a directly opposite view is taken.

The root of the matter may be frankly materialistic, but just because a woman has a potential value in cattle, she is welcomed into the world, she is guarded very tenderly, and she is treated with respect. The Bantus must be among the few people on earth who hope for girl rather than for boy babies.

And on the girl herself the custom has a sound influence. She has the assurance of one who realises

The People in South Africa To-Day

her worth, and she has to respect her body and her virtue so that a man may consider her worth striving for and paying for. She takes a pride in her value, and despises a woman who cannot command a substantial *lobola*.

Nor is she sold to the highest bidder. A certain measure of parental affection will prevent her from being considered as a slave, and, in effect, the transaction amounts merely to the suitor proving himself worthy of her.

The man, too, because he is made to work and economise that he may acquire cattle to purchase a wife, is improved by the law of *lobola*, and then he, in his turn, is moved to treat with care something which he has only been able to get by eating his mealie-meal in the sweat of his face.

Finally, the custom is of economic and social importance not only to the native but to the white man. It makes the native work, and it prevents polygamy. If a man has to pay a dozen cattle for a wife, he thinks several times before he decides to have more than one wife. And, as it is, he sometimes remains in his father-in-law's debt, and his eldest daughter goes to make up the purchase price.

So that to-day, what with this economic hardship, what with the fact that, since Kaffirs no longer fight one another, there are more men than there used to be, only about ten per cent. of native marriages are polygamous. And, further, since cattle are not, in these times, so quickly come by, a Kaffir cannot marry as soon as he otherwise might like to do; and between that and his growing demands, and the growing demands also of his future wife, he, like his European contemporary, finds himself marrying at a later age than his father did.

The South Africans

The result of the practical difficulty of having more than one wife is that the native probably thinks to himself that, as polygamy is, in any case, denied him, he may as well become a Christian. And the result of his having to postpone marriage until he has advanced some way through maturity may, perhaps in due course, show itself, as it does among Europeans, in a shrinking family.

4

In the meantime, polygamous or not, the Bantus are a prolific people. One seldom hears of a black spinster. Nor does a woman bear fewer children because she is not an only wife. The proportion—about five and a half children to each mother—is practically the same in monogamy as in polygamy.

This fertility of the black races is one of the problems of South Africa. The natives are by no means, like the Red Indians or the Maoris, dying out before the sweeping advance of the white men. Many of the children die, of course, through unfortunate treatment, and because the land detailed to the natives cannot support too many lives. But the natives are naturally a healthy and vigorous race; and though the white man has given them a few of his sicknesses, such as tuberculosis, pneumonia, and, in particular, syphilis, pneumonia has, on the mines at any rate, been checked by inoculation; and, to counterbalance the transmitting of disease in general, there is also the curing of disease.

Again, the natives, unlike the Red Indians or Maoris, are not going to be killed by an excess of liquor. In some parts of the Union they cannot get intoxicating liquor at all; and, in the Transvaal, a European can

The People in South Africa To-Day

be sent to gaol for anything from six months (for a first offence) to three years, not only because he has sold, but even because he has given, a native a drink.

There is thus partial prohibition in the Transvaal. A white person may drink ; but not a black person, or a coloured person, or even an Asiatic. The Indian waiter who so slickly pours out the wine or whisky at an hotel or restaurant, the native house-boy who collects the glasses after a meal and has to dispose of their remains and then wash the glasses, are equally debarred from tasting liquor.

The liquor laws are, indeed, tighter now than they have ever been. A decade or two ago great fortunes were made by illicit liquor sellers. To-day there is no more talk of liquor "kings." And although it is true that natives still seem to be able to get drink, all the public sees of the business is that sometimes a desperate, pathetic person who has made a shilling by illicitly selling a bottle of bad wine is sentenced to six months ; sometimes a trap is set or a yard raided ; sometimes a too-dark man explains to a sceptical magistrate that he had a Portuguese or Italian mother ; sometimes a group of Kaffirs are found drinking a rapidly fermenting preparation called *skokiaan* in the outbuilding of a European's home ; sometimes an Indian or Chinaman is made to prove how, only by accident, a cask of innocent liquid has acquired too high a percentage of alcohol.

Yet, even if the natives do get drink illicitly, prohibition makes it difficult, and that is some advantage.

It is, of course, for his own benefit that the white man keeps drink away from the native : he does not wish the worker of the country to lose efficiency, and a drunken native is, naturally, a social menace. But to the black man himself the prohibition has been of even

The South Africans

greater value. It has helped to save him from degeneration.

And chiefly, of course, the natives are increasing because they no longer kill one another. 'These are not times when Bushmen may be shot at sight ; though, outside the Union, such things still happened until quite recently. Nor are these the days when 'Tchaka and Dingaan and Moselikatze went round eating up the land of their enemies, slaughtering men and women and the young and the old. Now they all, the black people, live peacefully in their kraals, and even if they only kill an enemy whom the witch-doctor has smelled out, or drown forbidden things like twins, or cut up someone for the purpose of concocting a magic medicine, the white people come along and make a fuss ; and quite often a perfectly well-meaning person, highly respected and with occult powers, is hanged.

And so, if one can't drink, or fight or occupy oneself with religion, what is there in life to do but propagate sons to plough the lands, and daughters to fill the kraals ?

There are some South Africans who speak very cynically about the position. Why, to our detriment and future disaster, are we cherishing and preserving the Kaffirs like this ? they say. Obviously, the solution of the native problem is to segregate the natives on land not too luxuriant, allow them to spend their money on drink, refrain from interfering in their sanitary arrangements, and see that hostile tribes are placed in convenient proximity to one another.

CHAPTER III

I

THAT, they say in jest—but many seriously-intended things are said in jest because they are too dangerous to say otherwise—that is the only real solution to what is called the Native Problem.

The trouble, of course, is that people speak of the Native Problem as if it were one problem, just as they speak of the Asiatic Menace as if it were one menace. Natives are not merely natives. They are peoples, nations, groups, tribes, communities, kraals, locations, classes, sets, individuals. One might as well try to apply the same formula to a Turk and an Englishman, to a grandee and a peasant, as to a naked Swazi, whose Queen is the hereditary rain-maker, and a Christian Basuto living in his location at Bloemfontein, wearing European clothing, holding a life-insurance policy, sending his children to school, allowing them to learn the piano, playing tennis, singing hymns, and despising his neighbour whose house has a flat, instead of a pitched, roof of corrugated iron.

There are natives who live among natives, and there are natives who live among Europeans. There are tribes that are friendly to one another, and there are tribes that are hereditary enemies. There are some who believe in the spirits of their ancestors, and there are some—over a hundred and twenty different sects—who believe in a Christian God, and there are even some who follow Mahommed.

The South Africans

In the Transvaal or Free State an educated native may not vote. In Natal he has a merely theoretical franchise. But in the Cape, although the education and property qualifications necessarily fall harder on him, he has the same political rights as a European, except that since Union he cannot sit in Parliament.

In the kraals, in those small villages of huts that, like cattle-folds too, are called kraals, whole tribes spring to the command of their chief as soldiers to attention at the word of an officer. He has sway over them more absolute than a European can imagine. But in the locations outside the towns, and in the towns themselves, there are no chiefs, no tribal regulations. The life of the old-fashioned kraal native is still largely, though not, as at one time, entirely, based on two great principles: obedience to his chief and his tribal laws; a socialism of the most comprehensive character. The tradition of the first principle has made him one of the most law-abiding people in the world. Having fought the white man, and admitted the white man as his superior, he now follows his chief in giving him his respect and obedience. Within a few years of the time when Dingaan and his Zulus had tried with their black bodies to bar the white advance into Natal, one single white man, that same Theophilus Shepstone, who later annexed the Transvaal, and whom they called Somtseu, was ruling between one hundred thousand and two hundred thousand Zulus in Natal. And so, for thirty years, he ruled them, and in peace.

"Know ye, all Chiefs, Petty Chieftains, Heads of Kraals, and Common People," he proclaimed in the beautiful oratorical style of the Zulus themselves, "a man's life has no price: no cattle can pay for it. He who intentionally kills another, whether for witchcraft or otherwise, shall die himself; and whether he be a

The People in South Africa To-Day

Chief, a Petty Chieftain, or Head of a Kraal, who kills another, he shall follow his murdered brother; his children shall be fatherless, and his wives widows, and his cattle and all his property shall become forfeited.

“Let this be proclaimed in every kraal and on every hill, so that none may say ‘I knew not!’”

2

With the native's adherence to his chief is bound up his socialism—that is, the socialism of the unemancipated kraal native, and it would surprise the tradition-breakers of modern Europe. For the difference between the socialism of the essential Kaffir and that of the essential European is, that with the Kaffir it is instinctive because it is primitive, but with the European it is self-conscious because it is a deliberate superimposition on a tradition which he believes has failed him: it is in his head and heart and not in his blood.

In the kraal the chief holds the land in trust for the community. In the kraal—and the principle extends to the town—no man can be destitute, for his friends, without question, assist him. In the kraal there is no spirit of emulation. No one wishes to possess more than another, to work better, to excel materially at his associate's expense, or to his chagrin. . . .

A fellow-tribesman is addressed and introduced and referred to as brother—so that if a European wants to know the actual relationship between two men he must patiently inquire whether they had the same father and mother, or perhaps only the same father; whether their fathers were brothers or their mothers sisters; or whether they merely belong to neighbouring families.

The South Africans

If a naked child of three, with his round, serious, black eyes, and his protruding little belly, gravely performs a native dance at a white person's request and is rewarded, he will, as a matter of course, hand over his reward to some elder child, or, if it is divisible, share it. Any Kaffir, young or old, will, in the leanest times, regard the food that is given him as a trust for the common good.

When a man dies, not only his possessions, but also his liabilities, descend on his children.

On the other hand, as the individual has a duty towards the tribe, so has the tribe towards the individual. It is responsible—and the Government looks to the chief as embodying that responsibility—for the well-being, the security, and even the misdeeds of its members. As a result, the kraal's esprit de corps is manifested in a directly opposite way from that of, say, the English public school and Mr. Kipling.

In the kraal a man tells. (But so, of course, does the European of one who is not in his social stratum.) If a kraal-dweller has transgressed the law, his fellow will report him, for otherwise he must share the penalty of the transgression. That, and not shielding the wrong-doer, he has, accordingly, found it expedient to cherish as his highest duty. The cause of the community, which is also his own cause, has first call on his conscience.

It is merely a question of which tradition seems to work out better. But it is, on the whole, likely that if Walt Whitman had been as well acquainted with the hearts of Kaffirs as with those of animals, he would have stood and looked long and long, not into a pen or shed, but into a reed-built, hive-shaped, smoke-filled, windowless Kaffir hut, and would have pointed out how among Bantus in the same kraal there was

The People in South Africa To-Day

no sweating or whining or repenting or praying—no respectability or mania for owning things.

However, whether as a result or not, the Kaffir drives the animal, and the European drives the Kaffir.

3

And the European ideal is beginning to encroach on the Bantu ideal. The Kaffir who has migrated to the towns is doing his best to adapt himself to the white man's standard. If, as has already been described, the kraal Kaffir calls the town Kaffir a coward because he performs menial tasks in the homes of the white man, the town Kaffir sneers at the kraal Kaffir because he wears a skin; because he cannot speak English or Dutch; because he is bewildered by city life. "He not clever, like me," the domesticated native explains patronisingly as he introduces his fellow who, for the first time, is seeking work in a city, and cannot speak the white man's language. . . .

There they stand, fronting one another at the back door, or across the garden wall, the one who has adapted himself to the new civilisation, and the other who, after a struggle, has at last realised that he, too, must succumb.

For the kraal can no longer hold him. Not only has the black man increased, but the ground assigned to him has shrunk. In Natal (including Zululand) 43·1 per cent. of the land is set aside for the natives. In the Cape 8·75. In the Transvaal 3·56. In the Orange Free State 0·2. In Natal, that is to say, the accommodation is adequate—more than adequate, the people of Natal bitterly suggest. But the other figures tell their own story. The reserves in the Cape cannot meet the native requirements. In the Trans-

The South Africans

vaal over seventy per cent. of the population have assigned to them three and a half per cent. of the land. In the Free State sixty-seven per cent. of the population own a fifth fraction of one per cent. of the land. Bechuanaland and Basutoland are, of course, native protectorates. But they are close-fisted countries, yielding their benefits meagrely and resentfully, and Basutos and Bechuanas actually overflow into the Free State and Transvaal. Only in Swaziland can a black man still spread himself and be happy. . . .

And, all the time, legislation is further and further narrowing the chances of the native on the land. What, then, is he to do? He has not learnt, he will not very soon learn, to farm more intensively. Such and such is his tradition. He is not going to affront the spirits of his ancestors and the conventions of his elders by presuming to improve on their methods. He knows quite well how the white man works. He has himself assisted him with his lands and with his beasts. He has supervised, he has managed, the white man's operations. But his heart cries within him that he is a Kaffir. And when he goes home, he puts aside the experience he has acquired from his white master, and he plants as his forefathers planted, and he is merged once more in the old life, and he feels that he is not disturbing the course of nature, and his soul is at peace.

4

But the native who has gone to work in the homes or the mines of Johannesburg is in quite a different position from the native who has merely gone to work on a farm. For the town gets him: its shops, its streets, its people, and its movement.

When he comes to Johannesburg for the first time,

The People in South Africa To-Day

when he stands at the back door facing a smart and civilised Ntaka who is now called Charlie, or a Mkubeni who has been re-christened Scotchman, or a Mahloh-lane who answers to the name of Napoleon, when he utters what is sometimes his only word, "job," when, degraded by his disgusting clothes, he clutches his filthy cap in incompetent supplication, there is little in him to remind one of 'Tchaka's warriors. Who gives these natives their first employment is the puzzle.

However, work the native must get, or he may not—the law forbids it and will punish defiance—he may not remain in the city. And so, since he has not been secured by an agent for the mines, he walks the streets of Johannesburg, looking for work.

When he gets it, he is taken to a pass office to be examined by a doctor and to get a pass, which must be renewed monthly at a premium of two shillings, legally payable by his employer.

The pass entitles him to existence in Johannesburg, and the same conditions apply to towns in the Transvaal generally, and also in Natal and the Free State. But if he wishes to go out at night he must have a special pass.

Any day in the pass-offices a concourse of natives may be seen.

Now humanity in the mass—unless it partakes of the quality of the individual: is dressed in uniform, marches in step, sings in harmony, is excited as one, or is blurred into unity by dimness or distance—an assembled humanity is always offensive to the senses and spirit. But it is never so offensive to either as when it takes the grub-form preceding civilisation, as when it presents itself in the shape of a swarm of dirty, dusty-haired natives, dressed in the discarded clothing of the European—the unrelated, the filthy, the unsightly

The South Africans

rags that not the most degraded of white men would wear. There are circumstances under which dirt and tatters are held to be picturesque. Yet not even an artist of to-day would wish to express his realism in the drabness of dirt of a group of natives waiting outside a pass-office. . . .

But when the native in his leopard skin or his brilliant cotton blanket, when his woman with her load on her head and her child slung across her back, stride erect and with free, swinging movement along a red and unwrought road ; and the sun makes sharp yellows and blacks ; and the sky is a fierce blue above them -not a serene blue, but a burning, angry blue ; and the barren, rusty mountains, crested with rock, and crudely curved and angled as if God Himself had turned modernist, form their background ; *then* the Kaffir and his Africa are one, and there is that before the eyes to make a painter immortal.

5

Still, the native at the pass-office gets his licence to exist in Johannesburg, and goes to the home of his employer. He becomes a store-boy, rather more decently dressed than when he first came, sweeping floors and cleaning windows and depositing packing-cases and delivering on his bicycle meat or groceries or other small parcels. Or he drives a coal-waggon or a milk-waggon. He gets four or five pounds a month and his lodging, which consists merely of space on a floor in a room in a yard, and he finds his own food. If, however, he has become a competent house-boy, he gets three or four pounds a month, and if he has learnt to cook his wages rise to five pounds a month, in both cases with bed and board.

The People in South Africa To-Day

Bed and board, however, have variable meanings. They are probably better in Johannesburg than they are anywhere else in South Africa, as also are the wages. In Swaziland, for instance, where the native lives nearest his old tradition, a mature Swazi is paid fifteen shillings a month, and gets for food merely a daily allotment of about two pounds of mealie meal. But even in Johannesburg a native is sometimes fed and housed with extreme crudeness. There are people who build their boys' rooms with shelves of concrete for beds, and they give their very cook-boys only his mealie meal, and perhaps—not necessarily—a daily ration of meat. In practically all households, if the boys have bread, it is special Kafir bread; if they have sugar or tea or syrup, it is specially inferior sugar or tea or syrup. The natives do not touch milk or butter. They have no vegetables except such scraps as come from the table. And, of course, this is not suggested as a particular hardship, for such a diet is a great deal better than the food they have at home, and they often return to their kraals fat and shiny. Yet, in many homes, the native servants are, through lack of feeling or imagination, badly housed and under-nourished.

A householder who will feed his natives with regard to the fact that they are learning in his house to want, not only outside their bodies, but inside their bodies, the comforts of civilisation, and who can refrain from thinking of them with the contemptuous intolerance the word suggests, as "niggers," may have, for as long as he chooses, their eager and devoted adherence.

The South Africans

6

This matter of considering the Kaffirs as "niggers" is, perhaps, the unpleasantest aspect of the attitude of white towards black. It connotes a deliberate spiritual blockage. There are people who are intellectually convinced that the savage races are lower in the natural scale than the Caucasians. Darwin, who thought it "somewhat more probable that our early progenitors lived on the African continent than elsewhere," also suggests (though there are other scientists who do not agree with him) that "at some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilised races of man will almost certainly exterminate and replace the savage races throughout the world. At the same time the anthropomorphous apes . . . will no doubt be exterminated. The break between man and his nearest allies will then be wider, for it will intervene between man in a more civilised state, as we may hope, than the Caucasian and some ape as low as a baboon, instead of as now between the Negro or Australian and the gorilla." . . . By which he obviously indicates that he does not place the Negro or Australian with the Caucasian. . . .

And there are people who regard the black man as the white man's enemy, and a menace to civilisation.

But neither of these habits of thought—not the one which scientifically degrades the Kaffir in nature, nor the other which dignifies him by linking him with terror—is so unpleasant to contemplate as the thoughtless, arrogant contempt of one human being for another human being.

There is nothing in life so enraging as the offensiveness of a closed mind. It is like the slamming of a door

The People in South Africa To-Day

in the face of the spirit. Hammer, hammer, the thing is tight-shut, and there is no entrance.

The sort of person who speaks of a Kaffir or a Negro as a nigger is sometimes merely careless and casual, but almost always he stamps himself as one untouched by the decencies of living and the subtleties of culture.

7

It is extraordinary how very often the black servant overtops in dignity his white master. The reason is that all kinds of people are masters in South Africa who are not accustomed to such a position. They have never before employed the labour of others, and it intoxicates them to do so. There are South Africans who have been brought up to a tradition of hostility against the native—their ancestors and his ancestors waged war against one another for the soil of Africa; but there are also those who come from overseas without prejudices in their blood, and within a few months they are both metaphorically and actually spurning his body with their contemptuous feet.

8

There is one thing about a black man that the average South African cannot bear: and that is to see him well dressed in the European style.

And he has reason for his intolerance. A Kaffir wearing the greys and blacks and browns of modern convention is æsthetically unsatisfactory. The sober colours make his brown-black skin look like mud. And, still worse, although he often has an imitatively sound and decorous taste in clothes that the European need not despise, he wears those clothes with a self-

The South Africans

conscious air and swagger, which are not only amusing but, if one does not look beneath the surface, also subtly offensive. There is a frightened, resentful feeling in the white man's heart when he sees the Europeanised Kaffir. He thinks, without completely realising his own thought, that the Kaffir wants to reach up to him.

As a matter of actual fact, the Kaffir, when he is not in his barbaric state, looks best in the white drill suit which is his customary wear in household service.

CHAPTER IV

I

BUT not all Kaffir house-workers have come to the towns from the kraals. Some are town-born.

Outside the towns and villages of the Cape, Transvaal, and Free State—though not, generally speaking, of Natal—are locations set aside for the Kaffirs. These locations fall under various systems of control, and are, as a rule, administered chiefly to the end that they shall not be a nuisance to the white population.

Sometimes, as at Bloemfontein, the natives in them aspire to comfort and self-respect. Sometimes, as on the River Diamond Diggings near Kimberley, they live in a state which is a condemnation of God and nature and humanity. But, wherever they are, they dwell—even more in a spiritual than in an actual sense—as tenants and not as owners of the earth, and they may be told to make their locations elsewhere, and they barely trouble (perhaps in any case they would not trouble: it does not seem to be in them) to embellish their plots of ground with a flower or a tree or any little beauty of the soil.

Yet, in such a community as at Bloemfontein, for instance, they lead a life which varies only in degree from the life of their European masters in the town. Most of the Bloemfontein natives are Basutos, and therefore rather more civilised than the warrior-bred native. They have their social sets and social standards.

The South Africans

They live in brick houses with streets at their doors. They save from wages that are lower than anywhere else in the Union. They are devout church-goers. They fervently respect their black ministers and teachers. They marry as Christians, and not necessarily with *lobola*. They have English or Dutch Christian names, and call one another Mr. or Mrs. . . . Mrs. Selebane, Mrs. Itumeleng, Mr. Olifant. . . . They go, with avidity, from youth, through maturity and into senility, to Sunday school. It is their club, anything connected with the church. They sing hymns, giving them an odd Kaffir quality in the singing—wildness penetrates the meek notes of the music. They go to school. They learn the piano. They play tennis. They love letter-writing. “I take this short delightful,” they begin in English, although they converse in Dutch or Sesuto, “I take this short delightful to acknowledge to you my life on earth.” Or, “Just a few lines as to let you know for I am still under Power of God hoping the very same from you.” Nearly always an exultant and confident piety informs their epistolary style.

Mundane matters, however, concern them nearly. They are greatly comforted by insurances of various kinds—particularly insurances that will provide them with an adequate funeral. There are some who “keep themselves high” against others—for much the same reasons as prevail amongst Europeans. They have a larger house, or a verandah, or a piano, or a practically complete dinner service. The wife doesn’t have to work. The minister visits them oftener. There are no children in the family unsanctioned by wedlock, and, still more, there are no yellow children in the family. Not all families can say as much these days. . . .

Indeed, such people as have here been described are,

The People in South Africa To-Day

on the whole, a decent, honest, respectable, law-abiding community . . . but not—given the opportunity—as clean as the domesticated Zulus, nor as healthy or agreeable to look at. They die easily of many diseases, and chiefly of syphilis.

2

They die still more—and again of the same disease—in the worse locations, such as those on the River Diggings.

How to define the Kaffirs who live on the Diggings is difficult. They are living where, in early days, there were Bastaard and Griqua settlements, where Koranna Hottentots and Bushmen once wandered. Then Basutos came along from that hilly country which, in his time, the subtle Moshesh governed. And Batlapins came, whose tribe had survived by grace of Moselikatze's royal gesture. And the despised but wily Fingoes came. And people of other tribes drifted down too: Barolongs and Damaras and Matabele. And they all mingled with one another.

Presently there began to appear in the locations casual yellow children by way of casual white fathers, and these too were stamped into the mixture.

And at first the River natives were not in a very much worse situation than other natives: they planted their mealies, and owned a few cattle and sheep, and the young men could afford to give their prospective fathers-in-law *lobola* for their wives: and that, as has been pointed out, is the backbone of native morality and dignity.

But to-day the River natives have forgotten about *lobola*. For in the year of the Jameson Raid there fell on the land also the great cattle pest, the Rinderpest,

The South Africans

and their cattle died. Then the Boer War broke out, and diamonds became unsaleable, and the diggers could not, and would not, employ them, and even the Kimberley mines were closed to them. They ate up or sold whatever cattle they had left. They gave up planting. They wore, against the winter, old sacks. The little children's legs were like sticks and their stomachs were swollen through the eating of wild berries and roots. The concern for life was gone, and life itself was meagrely held. Any little sickness that came along made dust of them. A man would be walking along like other men. And the next day one would hear of his death. "Oh, yes, it was his head that was troubling him." Or "His stomach it was drawing." Or "He had the bad sickness."

From the Rinderpest and the Boer War the Kaffirs on the Diggings never recovered. The Great War could do little further to degrade them. Some of the young men, like other South African natives, went "to the Join," as they called it—they were drafted, that is, into a labour corps, and even in this non-combatant capacity against the inclinations of many South Africans. But they came back from Europe to the life which they had accepted as theirs.

They no longer paid *lobola* for their women. They could not scrape together enough money to pay a parson for marrying them, or to buy clothes to marry in, or to provide a feast for the wedding guests. Their women came to them as animals go to their mates. They bore occasional yellow children in between the black ones. . . . And sometimes, after years of living together, a piece of luck might come their way: a man might pick up a big diamond for his master and be handsomely rewarded, and then the couple would repair their sin. They would go to church and be

The People in South Africa To-Day

married. And their black and yellow children would be their bridesmaids, and people would come to feast and drink illegal Kaffir beer and dance under the moon, and at last their union would be sanctified in the eyes of God.

3

If only they could get regular work on the Kimberley diamond mines instead of irregular work on the Diggings, things would not be so bad. So they say. But the truth is, life has been too much for them. They lack the spiritual energy to go out and find work. It is not really a physical question. If, for instance, they happen to live a few miles from the river—this Vaal River—they will not, though there is water everywhere, assemble and dig a well or two. They will, a whole community, prefer to walk several times a day, for twenty or thirty years, with a little can of water on their heads; they will go long distances for water for drinking and cooking, though barely for washing, rather than embark on the undertaking of digging a well within a hundred yards of their little evil huts. First their bodies dragged down their spirits, and now their spirits drag down their bodies. And even the organisations which recruit natives for the Rand mines do not seem to consider the River Kaffirs worth troubling about.

And that is significant. For the mines are desperate for native labour. Natives have to be lured to come to the mines, and so it always has been. To-day there are about a hundred and seventy thousand mine-boys on the Rand, of whom a great proportion come from the East Coast—that is, from Portuguese territory—and yet the mines are insufficiently supplied

The South Africans

with native labour. They need, at the moment, another twelve thousand men, and cannot get them.

There are people—and the present Government is very effectually with them—who are strongly against this recruiting of labour from without the borders of the Union. They point out that not only has South Africa, the Union, already five and a half million natives and coloured people on its hands—the burden and anxiety of their mere presence—but that one European in ten in South Africa is a poor white, unemployed and unemployable, and that white men cannot get work, and white children cannot get food. And they are inflamed against this system of recruiting indentured, wage-reducing workers from outside the country, and sending them home again with the country's money.

But from the mine-owners' point of view there are several reasons for this position. As to the business of employing East Coast natives rather than Union natives, they cannot, they say, without great difficulty, get Union natives. The Union natives do not readily accommodate themselves to industrial habits. They are a pastoral and, to a limited extent, an agricultural people. They enjoy seeing their cows graze and their mealies grow—and particularly if it is a good season. They prefer that to having to get up at half-past three on a cold winter morning, and going down a shaft in a dark skip, with a little bun of bread to comfort them, and creeping about naked and sweating on underground stopes. They will not come to work unless they want to buy cattle for *lobola*.

As for the Zulus they simply do not care for mine-work. They are too proud. They will act as police-boys, or work in shops or offices or houses, but they

The People in South Africa To-Day

will not herd with Heaven knows what tribes in mine compounds.

And so it is chiefly natives from the Cape reserves, and the Basutos of Basutoland and the Transvaal who come from within the Union to work on the Rand mines.

And these Basutos and Cape natives are not, from the mines' point of view such satisfactory workers as the East Coast people: the Shangaans and M'Chopis and Inhambanes. They are not so willing and docile—in other words, so broken in to service. The Portuguese natives come eagerly to the Rand. And, unlike the Union natives, they establish themselves with hearty goodwill in the compounds. The Union natives do not take the same pleasure in trying to keep themselves clean. They do not rub their heads with a paste of used carbide until their pepper-corns straighten out and become rusty coloured and can be brushed in a fashionable coiffure. They do not readily buy mattresses for their wooden or concrete sleeping bunks, or cover them, as the East Coast boys do, with flower-printed counterpanes. They do not, like the M'Chopis, dance wild and rhythmic dances to the tune of Kaffir pianos, or, like the Shangaans, strut and quiver and charge to the accompaniment of a clapping chorus dressed to resemble maidens. . . . Their dancing is hardly a science. They walk about sullenly in their old trousers or blankets, whichever it is their habit to wear, and when they have served their nine-months contract, they take home the money they have saved, and avoid, if possible, returning to the mines. . . .

So much for the employment of the East Coast native as against the Union native. With regard to the employment of the East Coast native—of any

The South Africans

native—as against the white man, that opens up a whole economic question. How far, from their own point of view, will whites replace natives? How far, from the mines' point of view, *can* whites replace natives?

Well, there was a time when the mine-owners thought they could not exist without Chinese labour, as the sugar-planters of Natal thought they could not exist without Indian labour. Yet, in the end, they could; and sorry enough Natal is that it ever imported those Indians. That makes caution necessary in accepting pleas of impossibility. Nevertheless, it is common knowledge that white men in South Africa will not do the work that black men do. And if they did do it, they would want many times the black man's wages. As it is, the white worker gets paid, on an average, twenty-two shillings and threepence a shift—about seven times as much as the native worker. . . .

If the black man does contract work he can make his average of three pounds a month; he can make, though very rarely, five or six or even eight pounds a month. He can also be housed and fed as the white man cannot be housed and fed . . . and this pay, such as it is, and this housing and feeding, are better than he would get as a farm labourer, or in any other less highly organised industries.

And then he can sleep, with eighty others, on little partitioned-off shelves of wood or concrete, in a room turned out and white-washed, by regulation, once a month. He can eat hard lumps of mealie meal, and sprouted beans, and soup made of heads and bones and vegetables. He can drink daily a couple of pints of a fermented mealie-meal gruel, and his Kaffir beer, which must have less than two per cent. of alcohol.

He is content with a pound and a half of meat twice a week, with his cocoa and the marmalade that, twice

The People in South Africa To-Day

a month, sweetens existence for him. He is overwhelmed by the magnificent hospital attention he receives ; for he is a fatalist, and this cleanliness and medicine may be admirable in their way, but he knows that when a man's time comes, struggling and protesting are useless. He is satisfied to live with five to six thousand other natives and not see his women-folk or children for nearly a year at a time ; and he is beginning to wonder vaguely whether men of strange tribes are as evil as he had imagined in his kraal ; and he finds, sometimes, excitement in the big, noisy life ; and he enjoys his dances, his concerts and church-services and meetings ; and he is taught things like Red-Cross work, and his eyes are opened to many problems of civilisation. . . .

And when one catalogues all these things, mine life sounds, really, quite bearable. But it is not a white man's way of living, and three pounds a month—or even the occasional five or six pounds a month a driller may make—are not a white man's wages ; and one may reasonably infer that to replace black workers by white workers might make an industry, which is spoken of as a comparatively low-grade proposition, and which is yet, after agriculture, the most important industry in the country—might make such an industry, paying something over six per cent. on cheap labour, quite impossible—except in the case of the richer mines—to carry forward.

However, as has been mentioned, it is not the experience of the country that a white man will do a black man's work, and the difficulty at present is that the black man himself does not greatly care about doing it.

CHAPTER V

I

BUT that will change.

To-day, apart from everything else, the native is lazy. For preference, he will buy a wife and breed up sons and daughters to labour for him. Or, if he cannot help himself, he will work for several months, and then idle until he has eaten up his earnings. For the life his forefathers have bequeathed to him is a large, easy life.

Now Emerson has said that the ultimate end of all social intercourse is a little high conversation. But nearer the beginnings of social intercourse a little low conversation may be just as agreeable. To lie naked under a mimosa tree discussing the making of rain is probably quite a good substitute for walking in the garden of Epicurus cogitating on the destiny of man. And the native, untouched by the European, was able to achieve the first. But the day he put on his earliest bead at the instance of that same European he entered upon a new scheme of existence.

Now, whether he wishes it or not, whether the white man wishes it or not, he has started behind his master on the long road whose end - a little good talk - is but the artificial form of its beginning. And now, like the rest of the world, he can arrive at the essential only through accumulation and elimination. He does not yet fully realise this. He is hoping that it may still

The People in South Africa To-Day

be possible to loll about in the kraal, and share with the others, and not go to work unless cattle are necessary for *lobola*.

But he is uneasy at the root of his being. Change is encroaching on his foothold. His world is no longer solid beneath him. Young men returning from the towns are teaching him to want things. Missionaries and schools are teaching him to do things. Traders are offering him goods, and employers are offering him the means of acquiring them.

While white men are discussing with one another whether they shall or shall not educate the native and civilise him, Nature is laughing at them. "You began this business," she says. "But can't you see I have taken it out of your hands now? For better or worse this thing is going on, and you won't stop it. You have lost control."

Soon it will no longer be a question of finding natives for the work. It will be a question of finding work for the natives. They will demand it, and adequate payment for its performance.

2

The young household Kaffirs walking about the streets of Johannesburg on a Sunday, thousands of them, sometimes clasping hands, sometimes in the company of young native girls in dresses of a peculiar bright pink and white stockings and high-heeled shoes, who come to Johannesburg not necessarily to work, make the South African thoughtful and nervous. The young Kaffirs are dressed very like their young masters. They are smart and rollicking. They are getting ideas into their heads. They are learning to write English. They are meeting members of other tribes

The South Africans

than their own, and are discovering that the chief thing about a Kaffir is not that he belongs to this or that tribe, but that he has a black skin and a European has a white skin, and that the issue is not between Kaffir and Kaffir, but between Kaffir and European.

It is on the Rand—in the streets of Johannesburg (“Josaberg,” as he calls it, or “Goldi”), but still more in its mine compounds—that the native is learning to develop a self-consciousness, a race consciousness, an industrial consciousness. He sees himself as an individual, and no longer as a member of a kraal. He finds that his father does not fit into the new scheme of things. He questions at last whether the white man can do no wrong, and whether a Kaffir may not use the white man’s physical and moral weapons against the white man himself.

There was a rebellion in Natal in 1906, but that lacked the modern conception. There were, however, native disturbances at Bloemfontein, Pretoria, and Johannesburg in 1919 that had a social origin, and in 1920 seventy-one thousand Kaffirs downed tools on the Rand mines, demanding more pay.

And these were the fruit of lessons learned from the whites.

Early in 1920, too, the natives of Port Elizabeth formed a Native Labour Union, and demanded for adult males an increase of wages from four shillings to ten shillings a day, and for adult females a wage of seven shillings and sixpence a day. They pointed out that their wages had risen, since 1914, by sixty per cent. but that the cost of living had gone up by over a hundred per cent. Their leader, the President of their Union, urged them to strike; was arrested and imprisoned without a warrant; several hundred excited supporters, armed with sticks, made a demon-

The People in South Africa To-Day

stration outside the prison ; a crowd of three thousand onlookers gathered around ; a jet of water was used to disperse the natives, who retaliated with stones ; the inevitable first shot was fired by the usual undiscovered person ; there was a stampede ; the police opened fire ; six Europeans were killed and wounded, and sixty-eight natives. . .

It was a demonstration in the new school of thought.

But a stranger thing than strikes happened among the black people of South Africa in this same year of 1920.

About thirty years before there had been formed in America a Negro religious organisation, called the Church of God and Saints of Christ. It had a prophet, and its followers adopted a mixture of Christian and Jewish ritual, conformed to the Jewish calendar, regarded Saturday as the Sabbath, and observed the Jewish Passover.

A South African native, a Wesleyan Methodist preacher dismissed from that Church, visited America, became an adherent of the sect, and, in due course, returned to South Africa—a Bishop now—to spread the new religion.

It became popular. Its rites included baptism by total immersion at midnight, and a kiss of peace. It preached the rise of the black people.

But then the Bishop died, and was succeeded by one Enoch, and presently the sect was split in two.

Now every year, for three years, Enoch and his followers met, by official permission, at a place in the Cape Province called Bullhock, to celebrate the Passover. They feasted for a few weeks and dispersed.

But early in the year 1920 they met and would not

The South Africans

disperse. They pleaded special services, sickness, inability to pay their train-fares. The months ran on, and still they were there, speaking of themselves now as Israelites, and of their leader as a prophet. In a newspaper in Italy appeared the information that Jews were making trouble in South Africa.

Now the Israelites were instructed to move on. But they had learned lessons from the Asiatics as well as from the Europeans. They adopted a policy of Passive Resistance. They offered no violence, but they obeyed no orders. They isolated themselves, refused to give their names, would not allow white interference, placed a guard at their entrance, and posted notices in English and Xosa: "Halt! --No Admittance."

In December they were still there. The non-Israelite natives protested that their wives and children were being enticed away. The white people grew more and more alarmed. The Israelites were offered free railage and rations if only they would go home. The Israelites, however, declared that they had a Pact with God, and refused to go.

A force of police arrived, and was ordered to leave by the prophet of the Israelites. The force left, withdrawing to a neighbouring farm, on guard, but taking no action.

April of 1921 arrived, and emissaries of the Government came to the Israelites, making offers to save the white man's face, suggesting that, on certain conditions, the Israelites might be legally established at Bullhock.

The Israelites replied, however, that they dealt only with, and through God, whose prophet was Enoch; that God wished them to remain there; that the Scriptures contained God's promise to gather His

The People in South Africa To-Day

people together ; that, deeply as they wished to obey the law of the land and injure no one, Jehovah was above the law of the land, and they dared not disobey Him ; that they would go when they received their instructions from above ; and that the punishment of Jehovah would surely fall on unbelievers, for the end of the world was at hand, and, for their part, divinely instructed, they were here to await it. . . .

In short, the Israelites, with the utmost politeness, regretted that they could not explain when they would leave. The matter was not in their earthly hands. They waved aside further attempts at discussion. The issue, they declared, was between God and the Government, and as for themselves, they took God's side.

A month had passed in parleyings. Now force was applied. The troops of the Government advanced upon the resisting legions of God, garbed in holy white, and led by their prophet in a cloak of scarlet. "God will not let you burn our huts," they cried. "If there is a fight, He will fight on our side." . . .

But it was artillery and a machine-gun against swords and assegais. On God's side nearly three hundred Kaffirs were killed and wounded, and seventy-five were taken prisoner. On the Government's side a European was stabbed, and a trooper's horse was killed.

From a neighbouring town members of the Automobile Club came to search out the dead and dying, and the hospital opened its doors. But throughout South Africa there were people who wondered if this bloodshed of poor half-savages, yielding themselves too trustingly to the faith of conquering civilisation, had been unavoidable. . . .

The South Africans

Not very far away from Bullhoek there had perished, sixty-five years before, tens of thousands of black people who had believed in a Kaffir millennium. They were inspired this time by a different creed, but the faith in their hearts was the same.

CHAPTER VI

I

ALL around the black man there are new, strange, terrible forces. To these he submits himself because they are the forces of the white man, his master, teacher, and conqueror. He believes in the white man's God. He does the white man's work. He wears the white man's clothes. He learns the white man's language, his skill and his wisdom.

Well, where is he? At Bullhock he relies on this God, and he is slaughtered. To the mines he is lured to this work, and the white miners rise in bitterness against him. From small shops, from second-hand-clothes men, at back doors, he buys the clothes of civilisation, and the better he dresses, the more he is sneered at and disliked. He attends Mission and Government schools and thinks, like a child, how he will please by his decency, his industry, and his progress, and hostile tongues declaim: "A native educated is a native spoilt." . . .

And spoilt, he dimly begins to feel, he is—though perhaps not in the white man's sense. For to the white man it merely seems as if a useful cart-horse has been turned into a circus-horse. He cannot carry a load, he cannot draw a vehicle, he can only run uselessly and showily round a ring, a freak, unsuited henceforth to true equine purposes. And what then is a native for? Why, obviously, to serve the European. And, so considered, a native educated is a native spoilt.

The South Africans

But from the native's own point of view—things being what they are to-day—he is also spoilt. He cannot return to kraal life any more than an adult can return to childhood. It is not only that he has begun to dress like a European. He has been educated like a European; trained to think and feel like a European. He is not merely—and crudely—a native. He is a particular kind of native: an African with a European standard.

A well-known native teacher and publicist, a university graduate, writes, for instance: “In railways . . . his (the black man's) waiting-rooms are made to accommodate the lowest blanketed heathen; and the more decent native has either to use them and annex vermin or to do without shelter in biting, wintry weather.”

That is significant writing. It is an exposition of the educated native's situation. Here he shows how in his heart there is not only bitterness against the white man who has awakened longings in his heart that may not be satisfied, but bitterness also against the black man who has not been trained to have similar longings. Now he himself cannot but make distinctions between the blanketed heathen and the “more decent native.” Now he has æsthetic feelings: his skin may be dark, but he shudders before the vermin of other dark-skinned men. Now he has an idea of comfort: he does not, in the aboriginal way, suffer with equanimity, as a matter of fate, the affronts of the weather. Now he has a sense of his rights: he raises his voice passionately against the indignities and injustice to which he is subjected. . . And yet, at the same time, it is a fact that he prefers the scorn of the white man, for the sake of what else he may get from his civilisation, to the hopelessness of an unrelieved association with the

The People in South Africa To-Day

black man. The educated Kaffir trembles at the thought of a country of his own—separation of black from white—segregation.

What is his maturity to him then but a tragedy: a ripeness unused, souring, fermenting? What can he do with his training and his education? He can teach other natives to become the superfluity he has himself become. And that is all. He may not try to rise. He may not, even if his intelligence and capacity are of the highest, aspire to mount beside a European whose intelligence and capacity are of the lowest. And all the laws of nature would seem to stop and planets would crash wildly into one another and the universe would come to an end if ever a black man were lifted to a position of command over a white man.

That is the feeling in South Africa. And it slumbers even in the hearts of otherwise just and temperate men. However they may wish the happiness of the native, and strive towards it, and demand rights for him, there is something which prevents them from making an equal of him, except spiritually, except theoretically and still less a superior. They would feel their forefathers and their race degraded and the flag of civilisation in the dust if they saw a white man taking an order from a native. Nor can they easily—here and now—bring themselves to touch his skin. There are even men who have given their lives towards bettering his condition, and they cannot—they confess it with reluctance—shake hands with a native and not have a certain self-consciousness in doing it, nor would they put on their bodies a garment he had had on his body.

There are a few who maintain that they positively have no colour sense whatsoever; but they are, biologically speaking, sports, or they have overcome

The South Africans

traditional weakness, or they are, perhaps, from the noblest of motives, deceiving themselves.

There seems to be only one thing that can, to any noticeable extent, over-ride this profound feeling (call it instinct or call it acquired prejudice) which physically divides white from black : and that is the force of sex. A white man who would not touch a male Kaffir will take to himself the Kaffir's sister, and make her the vehicle for perpetuating his being, and give his own children the blood he abhors.

2

Here, then, is an impasse. The white man has awakened the native, and, like a dream, the old savage life is ended. He has been called. He has arisen. He is on the road—travelling in the shadow of the white man, carrying his chattels.

The white man looks around at this being he has himself aroused, who is following him ; who is serving him ; who is dependent on him ; for whom, on the journey, he must provide. And he thinks how useful it is that someone else's back shall be bowed under his burden, while he is free to exult in the air and sun of Africa.

The native follows patiently. Now it is time to take food. The white man throws the native a scrap. They go on again. The native is useful to the white man, but also he makes demands on the white man's resources. The master begins to wonder, a little resentfully, if he would not, on the whole, have been happier without his servant.

The journey is an arduous one. The white man opens up again his bundle of food, and thinks that, really, he cannot afford to give any more away, that he

The People in South Africa To-Day

needs it all himself. He begins to be resentfully conscious of this creature who makes demands on him. If only he could shake him off, he mutters to himself. He begins to feel that he is being dogged. He begins to suspect that the native isn't keeping a decent distance. He begins to distrust him, to fear him. The native, he knows, is not getting enough to eat. What if he were suddenly to take it into his head to spring upon him, and rob him of his means of subsistence, and run away ahead of him, and leave him there to starve?

How can he get rid of the native? How can he get rid of him?

He begins to make suggestions to the native that he should retrace his steps, return home to his beginnings.

"Look here," he says, "this journey of ours has been a mistake. You and I can't do it together."

"It is hard for both of us," admits the native.

"You'd better leave me," says the white man. "You'd better go back home."

"Go back?" says the native. "Home? . . . But the road has fallen in behind us. And my home is broken up. How can I go home now?"

"You are taking the bread out of my mouth," protests the white man.

"But I am carrying your load."

"I could have carried it myself. It would have been better."

"Then why did you call me?"

They face one another, unable to move forward, unable to move back.

And "I wish to God I never had called you," mutters the white man.

The South Africans

3

There are some who point out that over two and a half centuries ago the South African colonist was given the choice of whether he would use his own hands, or whether he would shift his burden of labour on to the black man. Two years after his landing at the Cape, van Riebeeck was importing Eastern convicts. Four years later he sent for West African slaves. In 1716 the Dutch East India Company asked the Council of Policy at the Cape to inquire into "whether it would be more advantageous to employ European labour than slaves." Only two men voted for white labour. But the words of one of them, von Imhoff, have kept abreast with Time.

"Having imported slaves," he said, "every common or ordinary European becomes a gentleman and prefers to be served rather than to serve. We have, in addition, the fact that the majority of farmers in this colony are not farmers in the real sense of the word, but plantation owners, and many of them consider it a shame to work with their own hands."

That is true to-day. And it seems, therefore, that when the white worker of these times cries that the black man is taking the bread out of his mouth, he has only himself to thank. And yet, human nature being what it is, can anyone be blamed? Suddenly, for instance, the diamond fields are discovered. Here are hundreds of thousands of tons of earth that must, urgently, be moved. There are hundreds of thousands of black men doing nothing. How predestined! . . . Then the gold fields are discovered. Millions of tons of earth this time. Tunnellings under the ground that would, one day, pierce as many miles of earth as lie between Cape Town and Khartoum. A continent

The People in South Africa To-Day

of cheap workers. How almost as inevitable as mathematics seems the association! Must it not really be an irresistible temptation to use men who will come for a seventh as much as others demand, instead of considering a vague and perhaps unrealisable Nordic ideal? . . .

It is true that the mine-owner is not a person with whom the country, after his attempt to foist on it a Chinese population to add to its other colour troubles, need be entirely sympathetic; and the fact that he thought Chinese labour essential and then found it to be unessential seems to leave a loophole for further experimenting. Nevertheless, how suddenly can a white labour system be made to supplant a black labour system? And how far can a situation for which, to a large extent, Nature herself is responsible, be controlled?

If the white man had not urged the native to come and work for him, would the seed of advance never have been sown in the native? Would it never have wakened but at the call of the white man? Need the native entirely blame the white man, and need the white man entirely blame himself? Was not this destiny set going on the day the first Dutchman landed at the Cape, and the first Bantu turned his dark face to the South?

4

The past is the present. But the present is the future. The white man is afraid of the Kaffir to-day as he was in the eighteenth century. But for a different reason. Then he feared him because he was fierce and bold. To-day because he is clinging and insidious: a drug, a growing temptation, a Hyde to

The South Africans

his Jekyll, the submerged monster in Mr. Wells' book, *The Time Machine*.

The monotonous jackhammer clanks, clanks under the ground, and the sweating black body bends to it. And above the ground the thundering stamp-mills are crushing the ore. And gold-dust lies in the folds of stretched corduroy. And a basin of yellow mud of very great value comes out of an oven. And houses are built, and fine clothes bought, and mind and senses regaled. And life is easy for everyone because the black man is sweating there under the ground.

And not only under the ground, but above the ground, and within the house and without the house. . . . And on the white farms of the Union he is squatting to the extent of half the native population. There the native squatter is, the most backward of all his kind, divorced from his tribal life; untouched by civilising influences; hampered in his movements by restrictive legislation; giving a quarter of his days and the labour of his ungrown children in return for his right to live on the soil; kept away firmly from the employment which is consequently offered to natives from without the Union. . . .

And, wherever he is, the white man—the unskilled labouring man—stands by and says: “Do this; do that,” and obediently the black body is set in motion.

The white man's hands are growing soft. Now he no longer wishes to use them. Now he wants merely to say: “Do this; do that.”

And when he has no one to whom to say it, he roves about in idle and helpless bewilderment. In South Africa—let the figure be quoted again: it is deserving of attention—one white person out of ten is a poor white, unemployed and unemployable. South Africa, needing so badly white men, has no room for

The People in South Africa To-Day

him, cannot support him, does not want him. The Kaffir has taken his place.

But there is the skilled worker. He stands menacingly over his job. Let not the black man touch that. Let not the black man come here with his cheap, groping hands. Stand clear. Keep away. There are enough poor whites in Africa.

The black man looks at the work. He could do it, he thinks longingly. He is so wearied of the pick, and the burden on his back. Is he, then, to be condemned to that for ever? And nothing else? No higher hope?

“Yes,” says the new Government. “That is what we mean. While you are among us, unskilled work or nothing. And not unskilled work, if we can prevent it. Under the Minimum Wage Bill the temptation will be removed to employ, in this or that field, a black man rather than a white man. Under our Colour Bar Bill, when that goes through, it will become, in our discretion, impossible to do so.

“The prospects for you, we admit, are bitter. But we have to see to our own. Our first duty is to them.”

CHAPTER VII

I

THIS thick dark river that is called the Vaal River, and that runs through lands of gold and diamonds and platinum, and shines molten under a burning sun, has a black, rocky bed that lies under the moving waters like a secret beneath a pleasant life. At the bottom of existence, as it flows onward in South Africa, there is always the black man. Why have women not the vote in South Africa? Why is there this poor white problem? Why do white boys leave school annually without the prospect of hope or employment? Why, with a white population of a million and a half in a great land barely scratched, can South Africa not freely encourage immigration?

The answer to these questions and a hundred others is, "The Black Man."

To give women the vote in South Africa means giving black women the vote in the Cape, where there is no political colour bar, and facing all kinds of new complications.

Then as regards the poor white problem: A Kaffir will work, not only, as on the mines, at three pounds a month; he will work on the farms at a pound a month—or for nothing, if he is a squatter; he will work where the white man ought to be working; and, worse still, he will work for the white man who ought to be working. His mere existence makes of every white

The People in South Africa To-Day

South African an aristocrat. A white man, merely because of his lack of pigmentation—whatever his antecedents, whatever his character, whatever his standing—is Baas to every black soul in the land. The Kaffir deprives the European first of the desire, then of the opportunity, then again of the desire to work.

And that is not the end of it. Assume even that the desire is present: a white man in South Africa cannot, as he might in America, work beside a black man, still less can he work under a black man.

Now the boy is leaving school. What shall he do? He cannot begin at the bottom of the social ladder. He cannot shoulder a burden or make a road, or till the earth, or use a jackhammer in a mine, or fetch and carry in a factory or a business. He can learn a trade, he can go into an office or a shop, he can study a profession. But the trades, shops, and professions are crowded. There is no labouring class with wants to set the social machine going full speed. What are the Kaffir's wants? A few cattle, a few groceries, a second-hand suit of clothes. In South Africa there is not plenty of room at the top, for the foundation is not strong enough to support a heavy upper storey, and yet, such room as there is, is high up.

Consider, further, the emigrant. Who is the emigrant? Generally the man for whom there is no room in the Old World. The man who has the courage to recognise the fact and to go adventuring; yet, at the same time, the poor, anxious, desperate man. The man squeezed out by competition. The man wanting to make a new beginning. . . . Let such a one, says Mr. Galsworthy, the novelist, be caught young in England, and sent out, by the hundred thousand, to the great, empty dominions. . . .

Well, there is this land, South Africa. The British

The South Africans

possessions in South Africa are a dozen times as large as England and Ireland put together; but its whole population, black, brown, yellow, mixed, and white, is not half again that of London.

It seems to our emigrant that, really, a white man must be more rare and precious in Africa than in England; and that, after all, an Englishman ought to be able to teach a colonial a thing or two.

As Rhodesia and the provinces of the Union are fairly familiar to his mind, and South-West Africa and the protectorates are not familiar at all, it is the first he chiefly considers, and he tries to inform himself further about them with a view to coming out to settle. He has heard, perhaps, of South Africa House on Trafalgar Square, and he goes there to make inquiries.

Now what does he, or should he, learn at South Africa House? Will South Africa House say to him: "You are a labourer. We need labour in South Africa"? . . . It will say nothing of the kind. It will point out that there is already a great source of cheap labour in South Africa: the black man; and that there is an unemployment problem there, and no work for growing lads.

Will South Africa House say: "You are a farmer. Go out to South Africa. We need men to work the land"? . . . Not yet. For although the Government has ideas of instituting a combined immigration and irrigation scheme, and is already allowing people land on very easy terms, provided they do not employ native labour, it is their own they are helping first—the needy ones who belong to the country; and the others will have to wait their turn. To-day there is still a qualification necessary in inviting farmers to come to South Africa. And this is the qualification: "Have you two thousand pounds capital? If so, come

The People in South Africa To-Day

out to a new life. In Africa there are great lands and ready labour and splendid chances. But we do not encourage farmers to go out with less money than that. We have all the farm-hands we need among the Kaffirs. We have hundreds of thousands of native squatters. White men are leaving the farms for the towns. What we should like is men, not to serve, but to employ."

Or will South Africa House say: "You want to be a small trader. We need small traders"? . . . Hardly. It will shake its head in doubt. "Our Indians, you know, can under-sell, because they can under-live, Europeans. Only the Russian Jews seem to be able to compete with them, and, as you know, we do not particularly encourage them either. But, of course, if you have capital——"

Or will it say: "You think of practising there as a doctor or an engineer or a lawyer. We want English professional men. You will be welcomed"? . . . No. It will make explanations instead: "Well, the position is this. We have no lower classes among the Europeans in South Africa: navvies, peasants, such people. The Natives are our lower classes. We have no idle rich. We have only an idle poor. That is, we have the poor whites. In effect, then, we have fewer social divisions than you have in England. No labouring classes, you see, for the poor whites are a mere excrescence, and no upper classes. The immediate result is that we concentrate on the remaining divisions, and they are all proportionately overcrowded. Our universities are turning out more engineers, doctors, and lawyers than the population can accommodate. We should like to have you. But, at present, we can, unfortunately, hold out open arms only to people with money who can afford to set our really considerable resources going." . . .

The South Africans

And, of course, people with money can find more exciting uses for it in South Africa than they can anywhere else—the exploitation of South Africa has barely been begun; yet wealthy people are not essentially of the emigrating class, and, unless they can be induced to come and see the country and love it, they will not easily be persuaded to make it their home. . . .

2

Here, then, is the black man, and South Africa, for better or worse, has been built on the foundation of his existence. Nowhere in the world is life for the European so easy as in South Africa. All the unpleasant work is done by natives. No white woman need scrub a floor. No white man need remove the garbage. The digger does not dig, and the farmer does not hoe, and the miner does not break the ground. The black man, with all the tradition of idleness behind him, toils for the white man, whose ancestors believed in the dignity of labour—he toils, if it is demanded, from sun-up to sun-down.

It is no wonder the South African feels he cannot live without the Kaffir. The housewife points to her sister in America or Australia—a domestic slave. The mine-owner points to the mines in America and Australia—their output diminished by half. The farmer explains how, since only three out of five seasons are beneficent, he cannot afford white labour.

Wherever he turns, the need of the moment glares in the eye of the beholder, and dazzles his sight so that he cannot see the future. . . .

But what is the future? There are some who say that South Africa will be ruined if it does not exploit

The People in South Africa To-Day

the black man, and there are some who say it will be ruined if it does. There are those who maintain that if he is not repressed, kept poor and ignorant and uncivilised, he will, one day, in his pride, rise up and challenge the white races; and there are others who prophesy: "Take heed. Make not an enemy of him."

Many believe that if the native is not rigorously dealt with at once, the opportunity will soon be gone for ever, and South Africa will become a black man's country; and a few think that the white man must do his duty, without regard to consequence, without regard to himself; for not by the colour of his skin, but by the colour of his conscience, does a man find salvation.

3

Well, people have the naïve and pathetic idea that their interests are of universal concern, and, in their passion, give them a disproportionate place. The hawker sees life in terms of penny packets. The lover thinks the gods are solely absorbed in his heart-throbs. A million people imagine daily that the laws of nature are directed to their especial discomfiture. The white man begging at the door says things are so bad, it seems to him the world is coming to an end. The old dying Basuto, with his fading eyes on his helpless dependents, whispers: "I don't know what will become of the world when I am gone."

The South African thinks his South Africa is very important—more important somehow than Canada or Australia, although, if he considers mathematically the news-space he occupies in overseas papers, he begins to be disillusioned. Even then he cannot quite see

The South Africans

himself as one of a small population far away from the centre of things. And, reducing the matter still further, the person interested in the colour question may feel that the air he breathes is alive with feeling about it, and yet he may be wrong.

When one writes, therefore, that some say this about the natives and some say that, it does not inevitably follow that all people in South Africa are urgently taking sides in fierce discussions. As Mr. Arnold Bennett says in his preface to *The Old Wives' Tale* : "I gained the perception, startling at first, that ordinary people went on living very ordinary lives in Paris during the siege, and that to the vast mass of the population the siege was not the dramatic, spectacular, thrilling, ecstatic affair that is described in history."

There are people in South Africa who see the black menace as a great ocean against which a little white population stands as a dyke : not only the few million Bantus in the Union, but fifty, a hundred, a hundred and fifty millions outside, crowding downwards into Southern Africa, as has been the black man's steady way through the centuries. And there are naturally those whose lives are affected quite directly by his presence. But very many South Africans probably go about their business accepting the black man in their midst as they accept a chair or a saucepan. And, indeed, to be honest, whatever may go on subterranously, that is how he does chiefly impinge on the life of the average European. Not everyone need, unless he chooses, worry about the native.

But yet, however one tries not to stress the situation unfairly, it must be finally said that concern about the

The People in South Africa To-Day

native problem is spreading even among people who have never hitherto considered it. It is the genesis of so many other problems that are daily growing greater. Natives themselves are becoming so race-conscious. The Hertzog Government has dragged it so boldly into the limelight. Where other Governments have found the question too big, too delicate, to approach, too difficult to solve; have remembered that, as Lord Balfour said: "The problem before South Africa in the future is one which has never yet presented itself in the history of mankind," and have merely, abashed and diffident, tip-toed gingerly around its edges, the National Party has, for better or worse, poised itself for a leap at its very heart. Its idea, put crudely, is that the black man must be squeezed out of the white man's life for the white man's sake, and pushed into a separate existence. It has adopted, frankly and ruthlessly, what is called the policy of segregation.

5

The idea is that the black man ought to be detached from the white man's share of South Africa, and allowed to develop on his own land and along his own lines. The white man shall not enter the black man's sphere except, mildly, to give a guiding hand. The black man shall not enter the white man's sphere except, humbly, to give a helping hand.

There are, of course, a hundred difficulties in the way of this peremptory solution. These are the main ones:—How far is black labour peculiarly necessary to South Africa? Where is this land coming from on which the native is to settle? And what does the native himself think of the whole business?

This last, the native's own opinion, is not a matter

The South Africans

to which great consideration is customarily given. It is true that, although there are no black or coloured men in the two Houses, the native's interests are watched in the Senate by men specially selected for that purpose, and by a permanent Native Affairs Commission established in 1920; and that he may vote in the Cape on the same basis as the European, and in Natal, granted certain qualifications which are about as inaccessible to a black man as a white skin itself (there are three native voters in Natal Province), he may petition the Governor-General for admission to the franchise. But in the Transvaal and Free State he has no vote at all. And even in the Cape the franchise, for as long as he still retains it, does not give him a power so great as one might, at first glance, imagine. How many natives are there who own property to the value of seventy-five pounds, or receive an annual salary of fifty pounds, or can pass any sort of an education test? In effect, under one per cent. of the Cape native population votes.

And so, through Parliament the native can barely make himself heard—nor, indeed, considering the disproportionate number of coloured people to white people, may the vote be too lightly thrown to him. What then apart from the privileges already mentioned, and the right to sit on local native councils, has he for his protection?

Only his own feeble efforts at complaint and petition, and the altruism of a few white men.

Against the overwhelming body of South African opinion these things have not much weight, and it may be fairly said that, at the moment, there is ferment among the natives, but little expression and less power. The black man is not consulted. He is directed.

The People in South Africa To-Day

6

The question of segregation is, accordingly, in practical effect, narrowed down to what the white man himself thinks can be done—or ought to be done—in the matter. Except among some who are concerned about the labour supply, and others who are afraid the natives may suffer further injustice—the self-seekers and the altruists meet here—segregation is coming to receive more and more consideration.

Nor is it a new thing. A hundred years ago missionaries advocated some form of it. The early Transvaalers (and Shepstone supported their scheme) were in favour of an almost absolute cleavage of black from white. In Natal a modified division—a location system—was shortly after adopted. Not many years later the Cape Colony abandoned its policy of identity as far as the Transkei, the recently annexed native territory, was concerned, and now the Transkei is the model native reserve: a fostered self-government under white supervision and direction. Even to-day, by law, a European may not enter the Transkei without authority, and, although the letter of the law is not strictly observed, the proportion of white to black there is quite negligible. The Basutos, too, are, in a measure, self-governing, and there are no more than three white men to a thousand natives in Basutoland. So are Bechuanaland and Swaziland, like Basutoland, native reserves under the Colonial Office. And there are, besides, in all the provinces, native reserves and locations.

We have then already a modified form of segregation. But as natives move in and out of their own territories freely, and as even natives from without the Union come to settle in Union towns and villages, this

The South Africans

differentiation is really not a restriction. It takes no account of the general modern tendency to forsake the country for the town, nor of the very large number of natives whose lives are already interwoven with the lives of Europeans.

Now, however one may paternally explain to the natives that it is for their own good they are wrenched from the existence they know and thrust on to a piece of bare, and probably not too luxuriant, veld, however one may murmur in their ears that they have a chance to develop along their own racial lines, the natives will feel the iron hand and will writhe under it. Nor do the Europeanised natives wish to develop along their own racial lines. What they really aspire to do, what they have hitherto been encouraged and compelled to do, is to develop along the European's racial lines. And, again, they are reaching the stage when they may not as amiably as is expected submit to a segregation which shall only be lifted to the extent—gradually diminishing as economic conditions change—that the white man needs cheap labour.

But in the end, of course, they will do as they are told to do—some because it is their tradition, others because they will not be able to help themselves. . . .

It is possible that segregation may prove to be for the natives' own good, but, if it comes to pass, it will be directed solely by the convenience and necessity of the white people.

One of the three main difficulties in the way of segregation—the will of the black man himself—may thus be counted out. He will be disposed of, whether cheerfully or not, as suits the white man. The

The People in South Africa To-Day

economic difficulty can also be surmounted. Indentured labour may not be a **very desirable institution**, but it exists to-day among the recruited mine-natives (dereliction on their part is a criminal, not a civil, offence), and if it was possible to bring indentured labour from India to Natal or from China to the Rand, it will be possible to bring it, in some acceptable form, from one South African territory to another.

The real obstacle is the question of land. Casual suggestions are sometimes made of a great Central African kingdom for black men (there they are all to be dumped), and a grand, romantic, barbaric relapse. But this is mere dreamer's talk. The natives will have to be accommodated on land which is an extension of the various scattered reserves they already occupy, as their future development will also no doubt be an extension along lines of self-government and white superintendence already laid down in such parts as the Transkei and Basutoland. . . . And it is the problem of how to acquire this additional land—land enough for to-day, and to-morrow, and a century hence—that is the essential problem of segregation.

But there are friends of the natives who maintain that so far away and vague is such a possibility—the buying from the Government from white owners of sufficient land on which to settle the whole population of natives; so strong is the tendency the other way (for soil thought unsuitable for one purpose becomes, with experience, suitable for another purpose, and is clutched at again); so inadequate is the land already allotted to the black folk, that the ideal immediately to be aimed at is merely the conservation of such land as is already their portion.

The South Africans

8

Still here, in summary, are General Hertzog's plans for the future.

To set up Native Councils in gradually extending areas, with a central Union Native Council to which a majority of members will be elected by the natives, and a minority nominated by the Government.

To replace the prevailing, and ultimately disruptive, system that allows natives full franchise in the Cape, an illusory franchise in Natal, and no vote in the Northern Provinces, by a uniform franchise for the whole Union, under which natives will elect seven Europeans to represent them in the Union House of Assembly—these members to be additional to the quota laid down in the Act of Union, and not to have the right to vote on questions touching the basis of native representation.

To separate the natives from Cape coloured people, who are to be placed economically, industrially, and politically on an equality with Europeans—though these rights, General Hertzog pointed out, should not be allowed to encourage any diminution in the social distance between white and coloured. . . .

Neither the natives, on the one hand, nor, on the other hand, the negrophobes, who form the bulk of every class and party in South Africa, approve of this scheme, General Hertzog will have to face, on its behalf, perhaps ruinous dissension in his own camp; and no change in native representation may, by the Act of Union, be effected without a two-thirds majority in both Houses. But cautious supporters of the native cause consider that better terms than these,

The People in South Africa To-Day

which concede the principle that natives are entitled to a share in the government of the country, however limited, that better terms will not soon again be offered, and that natives will be wise, if ever the scheme goes through, to be content.

CHAPTER VIII

I

THERE remains, finally, the question of how far the African can accompany the European on the advance towards civilisation. The other question—whether he should be allowed to make the attempt—is no longer in point. The thing is finished. The black man has been started on the road and will not go back.

Now what are his prospects in the world? Has he, has the Negro, the same capacities as the European? Can the two establish brotherhood? Will the time ever come when each will consider the presence of the other a blessing? Is it destined that white shall finally overcome black from the South of Africa as in thousands of years it has not succeeded in doing from the North? Or has it already happened once in South Africa, and do the Zimbabwe Ruins stand witness to it, that the black people of the country absorbed a higher civilisation, and must white South Africa have a care lest one day, in General Smuts' words, "little brown children play among the ruins of the Union Government Buildings"?

2

If the past is the standard, then the Negro breeds of the world have not established their right to be considered as equals of the Asiatics or Europeans.

The People in South Africa To-Day

They have proved themselves virile and persistent, they have propagated their species and survived servitude, but their contribution to life has hitherto been chiefly animal. Towards such ideals as humanity—with the best understanding of which it is capable—has set itself, they have not assisted. Their highest attainment is that, given the opportunity, they have adapted themselves to white standards.

Their civilisation is the white man's clothes, the white man's religion, the white man's education, manners, habits, systems, hopes. They have never, unless the Zimbabwe Ruins suggest the contrary, imposed their will over a light-skinned race. They have never made an original contribution towards thought, towards art, towards the mechanical conveniences of life. Those of them who, in America, have achieved a moderate distinction, have nearly always had white blood in them.

Here in South Africa they are prepared to become Mahommedans as readily as they are prepared to become Christians. It merely depends on who has first access to their submissive souls. They have been guided, within the last few generations, into ten dozen different Christian sects. With their Bantu voices they sing hymns. On their Kaffir-pianos they play "Tipperary." Wherever they have been found they have been taken to be the white man's slaves, and not only is their slavery material, it is also spiritual. First they labour for the white man; then they copy him.

It must, therefore, be denied that the black races are to-day the equal of the white. What, however,

The South Africans

the future may bring, whether they may be able to outlive the whites as they have hitherto been able to underlive them, whether it is only that they are in Infinity a little slower-paced, and may yet adopt, adapt, and eventually rise to the crest, cannot be declared. After all, there are people still debating women's equality with men, and pointing out how few female geniuses the past can show. As women are proving themselves, so, one day, may Negroes. In less than two and a half centuries, according to Mr. Shaw in *Back to Methuselah*, the Minister of Health in the British Islands will not only be a woman, but a Negress at that.

In the meantime, the black man is not so different from, as he is disagreeable to, the white man. A Cape Select Committee on Native Education found, in 1908, "that the belief of the inability of the native to develop at a normal rate beyond a certain stage is not supported by facts, and that any definite assertion as to the capacity or limits of the native mind must at present be regarded as a deduction from insufficient evidence." Professor Pyle, an American, found in 1913 that about one-fifth of Negroes were equal or superior mentally to the average of the whites, and three-quarters of the whites were equal or superior to the average of the Negroes. It must be remembered, however, that in America Negroes are not necessarily pure-blooded black people. . . .

On the other hand, here in South Africa, employers of labour and other Europeans who come much into contact with natives maintain that, although they are surprisingly quick imitators, they have no initiative. They will most readily, and even capably, do what they are told and shown, but "If only they wouldn't think!" is the white South African's response when

The People in South Africa To-Day

confronted with the result of the native's untutored enterprise.

4

But that phrase "If only they wouldn't think!" suggests more things than merely black incapacity. It suggests also white impatience, prejudice, and hostile tradition.

The truth is that the white man does not really want the native to think. He wants the native to stay down. He is like any aristocrat who views with nervousness and dissatisfaction the rise of the proletariat. The white South African wishes to maintain his superiority over the black man. He believes in that superiority. He believes in it so ardently, and, on the whole, so justly, that association with the black man spells to him only contamination and discomfiture. He is afraid to approach the black man even when he pities him, he is afraid to render him justice even when his conscience urges it.

The whiteness he cherishes to-day is, of course, not altogether virgin, for to every three Europeans the Union shows one Eurafrican; but the lesson he has learnt so late he is enforcing now by means of every law and tradition and taboo he can conveniently apply. There shall be no brotherhood between black and white. At best, perhaps a step-brotherhood. No more.

The soundest and fairest observer of black and white inter-relationships in South Africa, Maurice Evans, has laid down the following three fundamental principles for the future association of the races:

"1. The white man must govern.

"2. The Parliament elected by the white man must realise that while it is their duty to decide upon the

The South Africans

line of policy to be adopted, they must delegate a large measure of power to those specially qualified, and must refrain from undue interference.

“ 3. The main line of policy must be the separation of the races as far as possible, our aim being to prevent race deterioration, to preserve race integrity, and to give to both opportunity to build up and develop their race life.”

5

White South Africa will not, in other words, amiably admit that, as Anthony Trollope said, “ South Africa is a country of black men—and not of white men. It has been so ; it is so ; and it will be so.” . . . As white and black came into the land together less than three hundred years ago, so they shall remain together. As white has always governed, so it shall continue to govern. . . .

That is white South Africa’s aspiration.

But it involves the solution of a problem before which not only every other problem in South Africa, but every other problem in all the world, is simplicity. The white people who are killing one another like savages do not laugh at themselves as they presume to restrain the savagery of the black.

No one can yet tell whether Anthony Trollope was right or whether he was wrong. No one is as wise as Destiny.

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